

THE
HISTORY
OF
LORD CLAYTON
AND
MISS MEREDITH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

DUBLIN:

Printed for P. and W. WILSON, H.
SAUNDERS, W. SLEATER, D. CHAMBER-
LAINE, J. POTTS, J. WILLIAMS, and
C. INGHAM.

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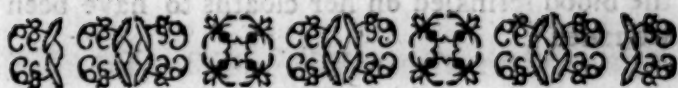
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ORD CLAYTON coming from a visit on horseback one evening, was struck with the distressful sounds of a female voice. Turning his horse towards the place from whence they issued he rode up to it: in other words, he quitted the high road, and galloped down the lane to which his ear and his humanity directed him.

IN the middle of *that* lane, at the foot of a tree, he discerned by the pale light of a feebly shining moon, a lady: he quickly dismounted, and coming up to her—What was his astonishment to see his Julia in so pitiable a situation! What was his affliction to see her tied to the tree at the foot of which she lay, appearing by

the blood sprinkled on her cloaths to have been wounded!

‘MY dear Miss Meredith,’ said he eagerly, ‘for God’s sake tell me immediately where you are wounded, and how you was brought into this unfortunate condition?’

‘Oh, Sir,’ replied she, ‘how providentially are you come to my relief, and how particularly grateful am I to heaven for having sent you to be my deliverer!’

‘BUT where are you wounded, my dear Julia?’ interrupted he with additional eagerness.

‘No where,’ said she; ‘but had not a noise alarmed the villain, he would, most probably, have murdered me; for having tied me—

LORD CLAYTON, having sharply charged himself with an unpardonable want of consideration for not having instantly disengaged her from the tree, ran to it, and, not being able to untie the cords, immediately cut them asunder.

WHEN he had unbound her hands, he raised her from the ground, and asked her if she thought she had strength enough to walk to the nearest cottage, which was at no great distance, and in which, he told her, an honest old woman lived who would do her all the service in her power.

JULIA,

JULIA, assuring him that she could walk extremely well, and wished very much for the assistance of such a woman as he had mentioned, he begged her to lean upon his arm, and led her with the utmost care and tenderness to dame Dobson's, ordering his servant to follow with the horses.—While they paced slowly along he frequently asked her how she felt herself, with all the anxious solicitude of a fond lover ; but postponed the further gratification of his curiosity, as he perceived by her tremor (occasioned, no doubt, by the mingled passions which arose in her gentle bosom at the sight of a man whom she so little expected to behold at that time) that she was not sufficiently composed to relate what had happened to her. He could not help, however, before they directed their steps towards Mrs. Dobson's, asking her from whence proceeded the blood on her cloaths, and she silenced his fears by informing him that it was only caused by a blow which her nose received while she struggled with her assailant.

JULIA, when she told her lover that she was strong enough to walk to the cottage, was not acquainted with her own strength ; for before she reached the hut, she found herself so faint, that Lord Clayton with great difficulty prevented her from falling.

MRS. DOBSON, as soon as his lordship had recommended her to her particular care, cried out, ' O dear Sirs ! the poor lady is vast bad ' indeed, and must be put to bed out of hand.'

JULIA, ready to sink under her mingled sensations, replied, ' You say very right, Mrs. Dobson, I am certainly much indisposed, and will, if you please, accept of your kind offer.'

' You shall be obeyed, Madam, in a whiff,' said the good creature, ' My Sue and I will do all we can to get you well again.'

LORD CLAYTON being satisfied that his Julia would be as carefully attended as if he himself was present, and being also apprehensive that the earl, whom he wished not to make uneasy, would be alarmed at his failing to return, agreeably to his promise before the night was far advanced, took leave of her in the tenderest, most affectionate, but most respectful manner, and, promising to come to her in the morning, remounted his horse in order to go back to his father.

LORD CLAYTON, finding that his father had been somewhat alarmed about him, amused him with an excuse for not coming home before, which prevented any enquiries concerning the cause of his late return; and pleaded also a slight indisposition, to apologize for his retiring to his own apartment soon after his arrival. The adventure of the evening had made such an impression on his mind, that as he could think of nothing else he wished only to give a loose in private to the various thoughts which it occasioned, and to see the sun begin again its daily course. Many a sleepless night, indeed, had he, before that adventure, devoted
to

to his Julia; but such a night, so full of tender solicitude, he had never spent in his life.

WHILE they were sitting at breakfast the next morning, the earl said, 'I have almost fretted myself to death, George, about this d—d five thousand; and do not know how to bring myself to relish the payment of it. Why cannot you now drive Miss Meredith out of your head, and help me out of this horrible dilemma by marrying Miss Jarvis? she is a sensible girl, an accomplished girl, and looks as if she would make a very good wife.'

LORD CLAYTON being just at that time thinking more about his Julia than either his breakfast or his father, started not a little at so unexpected a speech, having flattered himself from the manner in which he left him after the mention of the forfeiture, that the affectionate feelings of the parent would get the better of the sordid sensations of the miser.

'Do I stagger you, George?' added his lordship, on Lord Clayton's making no reply:

'You do indeed, my lord: from the vexation and concern which you expressed yesterday; on having acted so precipitately, I formed pleasing hopes which you have now cruelly blasted; for I find, to my extreme uneasiness, that you prefer five thousand pounds to my felicity.'

He said no more. Lord Bromley returned no answer with his tongue; but his features

plainly shewed that the father and the miser were engaged in a sharp contest in his bosom.

DURING *that* contest his steward entered the room with papers which required his immediate perusal: Lord Clayton availed himself of the arrival of those papers to repair to the cottage, as he most ardently longed to know how his Julia had rested after her fright and fatigue, especially as he had left her complaining of being much indisposed.

MRS. DOBSON'S humble and hospitable dwelling was not far from the earl's house: Lord Clayton, therefore, went thither on foot: but he went with such expedition that he rather flew than walked. When he arrived at the cottage he was not a little happy to find, that Julia had been considerably benefited by the refreshments which the worthy owner of it had administered to her.

AFTER a number of enquiries relating to her health, to which he received the most satisfactory answers, his lordship intreated her to gratify his curiosity by informing him what had brought her to England, and by what accident she had been separated from her parents; being well assured, he added, that Mr. and Mrs. Meredith, fully sensible of the happiness they enjoyed in the possession of so amiable a daughter, would never have suffered her to undertake a voyage from Ireland without them.

JULIA having thanked him in the most captivating manner for the disquietude which he had discovered about her health, and for
the

the compliment at the close of his speech, proceeded in the following terms; while he with a greedy ear devoured every syllable she uttered.

‘ My father having received a letter from England to acquaint him with the death of his elder brother, by whose decease a very good estate fell to him, thought it quite necessary to come over to take possession of it, and, therefore, made immediate preparations for his voyage.

‘ THE letter of intelligence was written by Mrs. Meredith, my uncle’s second wife, who having a son by a former husband had, we heard (for after his second marriage my uncle broke off on a sudden all correspondence with my father) taken an infinite deal of pains to get the estate for *that* son: but though she had influence enough over my uncle to occasion an interruption to the harmony which had long subsisted between him and his nearest relations, she could not prevail on him, by all her insinuating arts, to do an unjust action; that is, by cutting off the entail, to leave his estate to Mr. Norton. Mrs. Meredith, in her letter, would have appeared in a very advantageous light if we had not been too well acquainted with her real character to be duped by the flourishes of her pen; for she lamented the loss of her excellent husband in the most pathetic language, and expressed the strongest desire to see a man to which his unbrotherly behaviour had ever given her the deepest concern, and which behaviour was

‘ the only censurable part of his composition—
‘ (I use her own words.)

‘ AT such a letter, in such a style, my father
‘ could not help smiling, though he was actu-
‘ ally sorry to hear of his brother’s death, as he
‘ was naturally of a benevolent temper, and a
‘ considerable benefactor to his poor neigh-
‘ bours: we were all indeed struck with the
‘ flagrant insincerity running through it, as
‘ well as with the writer’s affectation in her
‘ phraseology. But to the purpose.

‘ WE embarked with all possible expedition
‘ on board a packet, esteemed an exceeding
‘ fine sailer, and, after a very pleasant voyage,
‘ arrived at Chester. There my father was
‘ taken so ill, that he could not think of pro-
‘ ceeding. My father, Sir, is subject to a
‘ gouty disorder, and whenever he is attacked
‘ by it, is generally confined for some time;
‘ though he had never, what is called, a regular
‘ fit in his life.

‘ MY father growing somewhat better in a
‘ few days, began to be so dissatisfied with his
‘ accommodations, that he wished heartily to
‘ be removed to more agreeable quarters. He
‘ felt himself just able to bear the motion of a
‘ carriage, and was therefore desirous of ma-
‘ king a visit to a worthy family not many miles
‘ from hence, as I am informed by Mrs. Dob-
‘ son, with which he was, when he lived in
‘ England, upon an intimate footing; not
‘ doubting but that he should find a cordial
‘ welcome from his old friends again, and a
‘ com-

‘ comfortable residence among them, till he
‘ was perfectly recovered.

‘ IN consequence of this desire in my father,
‘ and of his being in a condition to bear a re-
‘ moval, a post-chaise was soon hired for him,
‘ my mother, and her *woman*; and two horses,
‘ the one for me (as I preferred a saddle to
‘ any other seat) and the other for our ser-
‘ vant.

‘ IN this travelling equipage we left Chef-
‘ ter this morning early, and I kept up with
‘ the chaise pretty well till about two hours
‘ before you discovered me in so deplorable a
‘ situation: my horse then falling lame, I was
‘ obliged to stop; but not imagining that I
‘ should be detained a great while, as John told
‘ me he saw plainly what ailed the creature’s
‘ foot, and could soon set him to rights, I did
‘ not think it necessary to retard the progress
‘ of the chaise till I was ready to follow it.
‘ The driver therefore whipped on without
‘ looking behind him.

‘ WHEN John had examined my horse’s foot
‘ very attentively, he made me extremely un-
‘ happy by telling me that the poor beast hav-
‘ ing lost a shoe had been so wounded by some
‘ sharp stones that he was unable to walk with-
‘ out limping—If therefore, madam, continued
‘ he, you choose to mount my horse I will
‘ change saddles.’

‘ No, John,’ said I, ‘ as you will be pre-
‘ vented by that exchange from following me
‘ with

‘ with equal quickness, I shall receive no benefit from it: but this is a most unlucky event; for we shall not only be hindered from overtaking the chaise, but we may also turn down a wrong road, and even find ourselves benighted in the right one.’

‘ As to that, madam,’ replied John, ‘ you need not trouble yourself a bit; for I know all this part of the country as well as I do my own name, and will bring you safe to your journey’s end, though not so soon as you perhaps wish.’

‘ I WAS rather silenced than satisfied by John’s answers. In spite of his assurances, I was alarmed and full of a thousand disquieting apprehensions: imploring, however, the protection of providence, and trusting both to the knowledge and fidelity of my guide, I moved on slowly under his directions.’

‘ WHEN it grew dusk, I felt an additional damp upon my spirits, and from that moment, a thousand terrifying reflections crowded into my mind. Separated from my dear parents, uncertain of their safety, and strongly conceiving *their* sensations by *my own*, I should, I believe, have been deprived of the power of holding the reins, had not John perpetually endeavoured to cheer me, and to dispel my fears by animating speeches, for which I often thanked him, as I thought he deserved to be thanked for the solicitude which he discovered about me. But how difficult is it to know when the language of the lips, speaks the language of the heart!—

‘ Soon

‘ Soon after we got into the lane to which my screams drew your attention, the man on whose fidelity I had so much depended, dismounted and coming up to me, plainly told me that if I did not quit my saddle, and submit to his desires, he would prepare to take that by force which I would not give him with my free consent.

‘ I WAS, at first, so astonished at so unexpected an address from a person who had till then, not only behaved to me with a decent submission, but with a remarkable respect, that it struck me dumb: never had I been more surprized in my life ; but recovering myself a little, I replied, as fiercely as I could, What do you mean, John, by accosting me in this insolent and very unbecoming manner ?’

‘ Mean,’ said he pertly, and taking hold of one of my hands, ‘ I will soon tell you what I mean when I have got you out of your saddle: do you think I brought you into this lane for nothing ?’

‘ PROVOKED at his doubling the impertinence of his carriage, instead of making an apology for it, I whipped my horse, in order to convey myself from an impudent fellow with whom my honour was no longer safe, but I whipped in vain ; and recollecting the creature’s lameness, I shuddered to find myself unable to save that honour by flight. I was now absolutely in the power of a wretch who was deaf to all that I could urge to soothe him, or to deter him from his infamous intentions.’

tions. He pulled me with violence from my horse, and finding me struggle with all my strength to disengage myself from his arms (for I wished to try whether I could not run into the high road, hoping that somebody might be passing by who would pity my distress, and deliver me from it) he dragged me to the nearest tree, and tied me to it with cords, which he took out of his pocket. While he was tying me, he threatened to murder me if I made any noise ; but all his menaces made no impression upon me, I screamed as loud as I could. When he had bound me so fast as to render any resistance ineffectual, he was, in his turn, alarmed : happily for me he was alarmed by some rough voices in an adjoining field. After having rifled my pockets, and uttered words which I cannot repeat, he went to the lame horse, and did something to his foot which gave him immediate relief : for as soon as he galloped off on his own, the other followed him with as much swiftness as if nothing had ever hurt his foot. The moon shone only faintly while these proceedings were going forwards; but the light arising from it was sufficient to let me see what I have described. Distressed, however, as I was, in a place totally unknown to me, far from my kind relations, far from my friends, and far from being easy with regard to the rustic voices by which John had been alarmed, I could not help feeling an agreeable sensation throbbing in my heart at his departure : but that sensation was momentary, terror again took possession of me, and I again screamed as loud as I could : most fortunately for me I did not long scream in vain.—My cries soon brought
‘ a deliverer :

‘ a deliverer : but how was I at once astonish-
‘ ed and rejoiced to see you, my lord, approach
‘ me in so very amiable a character.’

LORD CLAYTON, finding that his Julia had concluded her little narrative, raised the hand which he had held in his during the utterance of it to his lips, and having pressed it to them, said, looking most tenderly, most respectfully at her, ‘ You do not know, my dearest
‘ Miss Meredith, how much joy I feel, how
‘ sincerely I am delighted, in having been sing-
‘ led out by providence to be instrumental to
‘ the preservation of your honour ; perhaps, to
‘ the preservation of your life ; for if the infam-
‘ ous wretch, who had dared to form a design
‘ against the one, had not been luckily intimi-
‘ dated, there is no saying to what length his
‘ fears of another kind might have carried him
‘ against the other.—But why stand the tremb-
‘ ling tears in those lovely eyes, my dearest Ju-
‘ lia ? (continued he) You are now under my
‘ protection, and you may be thoroughly assu-
‘ red that no unhappiness shall ever come near
‘ you, if I can possibly avert it.’

‘ I-AM exceedingly happy, my lord,’ replied Julia, ‘ in your kind assurances, and think
‘ myself particularly fortunate in being under
‘ your protection : but while I am in a state of
‘ uncertainty about my dear parents, my heart
‘ cannot be at ease ; I *must* feel for those who have
‘ ever made it the constant study of their life to
‘ make *my* life every way agreeable to me, and
‘ should be the ungratefulest of daughters, nay,
‘ quite destitute of sensibility, if I could, un-
‘ der

‘der my present separation from them, enjoy
‘a perfect tranquility of mind.’

‘You have considerably increased the high
‘opinion I had of your filial affection, my Julia,’ said her fond and faithful lover, ‘by that
‘dutiful speech; and believe me, I will do every
‘every thing in my power to learn whether
‘Mr. or Mrs. Meredith are with their old
‘friends in this neighbourhood, as soon as you
‘have acquainted me with the names of those
‘friends; or endeavour, should they have met
‘with any retarding adventure, to procure
‘speedy intelligence about them.’

JULIA having thanked his lordship in the politest terms for so kindly considering the anxious situation of her mind, by offering to make enquiries after those concerning whose safety she had a thousand alarming apprehensions, informed him that a Mr. Chapman was the gentleman by whom her father expected to be hospitably received, and with whom he purposed to stay till he was able to undertake his northern journey: the estate which devolved to him lying in the North-Riding of Yorkshire.

WHEN Lord Clayton heard the name of Chapman, he felt the most pleasing sensations in his breast, as he was no stranger to the domestic merit and conjugal felicity of that gentleman: he therefore replied, ‘You have given
‘me no small satisfaction, my dear Julia,
‘by your last speech, because I am very well
‘acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Chapman, and
‘do not know a more agreeable, a more amiable
‘ble

‘ ble couple. They have been married about
‘ half a century, and are as happy in each o-
‘ ther now, as they could have been, I think,
‘ in their honey-moon. I will very readily
‘ wait on you to Mr. Chapman’s house, which,
‘ as Mrs. Dobson rightly told you, is not many
‘ miles from hence : perhaps we may be lucky
‘ enough to meet Mr. and Mrs. Meredith
‘ there.’

JULIA, sighing said, ‘ You are extremely
‘ kind, my lord, to offer to conduct me to
‘ such valuable people ; but I am afraid to flat-
‘ ter myself with the expectation of meeting
‘ my dear parents under *their* roof. However,
‘ as there is, I must own, *some* probability
‘ that they *may* have been safely lodged with
‘ their old friends, I am the more desirous of
‘ accepting of your eligible proposal.’

LORD CLAYTON, after a very affectionate
adieu, returned to his father, whom he wished
to find disposed to give up the forfeiture to Mr.
Jarvis with a good grace. He had determined,
from the moment of his being acquainted with
that forfeiture, to discharge it, in order to re-
concile the earl to his marriage with Miss Me-
redith, having been enabled to make such an
advance for *her* sake by a legacy which was left
him by an aunt ; but he was willing to see
paternal affection get the better of avarice.

WHILE the horses were putting to the phæ-
ton in which he intended to carry his Julia to
Mr. Chapman’s, he went in search of the earl,
who was, his servant told him, gone into the
garden. He found his lordship in one of the
temples,

temples, but in so thoughtful an attitude, that his approach was not perceived till he had ascended the steps, and asked him if he was out of order.

LORD BROMLEY, starting from his *reverie*, said, 'A man is always out of order, George, when he is conscious of having done either a ridiculous or a wrong thing. Now, as I have behaved both like a foolish and a bad father, I am smarting under the correction of self-condemnation.'

'It makes me very uneasy, my lord, to think that you are suffering in this manner on my account.'

'I HAVE not deserved such a speech from you, George: but I will deserve your pardon, for having permitted a base passion to hurry me into measures destructive of your happiness. I will go to town immediately, and cancel my precipitate agreement with Jarvis.'

'You are so generously condescending, my lord, and fill me with such grateful sensations by the return of that paternal affection which has lain so long dormant in your bosom, that I beg you would permit me to advance the sum stipulated between your lordship and Mr. Jarvis, as I cannot bear the thoughts of your being deprived of that sum for *my* sake.'

'No, George, the fool should ever pay for his folly: I am resolute, and I will be expeditious.'

As

As Lord Bromley was a man who hated delay when any thing on which he had fixed his mind was to be executed, he was in a short time after the delivery of his commands, seated in his post-chariot, and whirling into the road to London.

LORD CLAYTON, having staid to take leave of the earl, mounted his phaeton, and drove to the cottage which contained the sole mistress of his affections; conceiving a scheme as he rolled along to facilitate his union with her. 'I am well assured that the payment of this no trifling sum, can never be remembered by my father without the greatest regret: I will, therefore, endeavour to make him doubly reconciled to my marriage with Miss Meredith, by telling him, that I do not desire him to advance a shilling towards it. My aunt's legacy, and the fortune which Mr. Meredith always intended, I have heard, to give with his daughter, if she married with his approbation, will furnish an income sufficient, if managed with œconomy, to support us in a genteel and respectable style of life. Pomp and parade have no charms for me, and if I have made right conjectures about Julia's disposition, they have no allurements for her: what is grandeur without happiness? and how rarely are grandeur and happiness united?'

WITH reflections of this kind Lord Clayton arrived at Mrs. Dobson's, and found his Julia ready to leave her rustic apartments, though she declared at her departure from the good woman

woman (after having made her ample amends by giving her some money which the ungrateful wretch who robbed her had, in his hurry, left in her pocket) that she should prefer a cottage with his lordship's company to a palace without it.

As Lord Clayton always drove spirited cattle, he soon made his appearance at Mr. Chapman's. The worthy old gentleman, having been riding over his grounds, was just going into his house, when the rapid approach of his lordship's phaeton attracted his attention.

LORD CLAYTON, when he had jumped out of his chaise, paid his compliments to Mr. Chapman, and having told him that he had brought a young lady to visit him, turned about to Julia, and received her from her exalted seat in his arms. Then, presenting her to his good neighbour, said, 'Here she is, Sir, as amiable
' a woman as ever existed, and I dare swear
' both you and Mrs. Chapman will be pleased
' with me for bringing her, when you have
' been five minutes in her company.'

MR. CHAPMAN behaved with the utmost politeness to Miss Meredith, but, at the same time, like a man who had never seen her before, and taking her by the hand, conducted her towards the house, telling Lord Clayton, to whom he looked over his shoulder as he led her along, that his lordship's taste in beauty was not to be disputed.

LORD CLAYTON, while he followed them, longed to ask Mr. Chapman if he had any friends down with him; but apprehensive that Julia might be too much affected, if she heard no mention made of her father and mother, he chose to postpone, on *her* account, the gratification of his curiosity.

WHEN Mr. Chapman had carried Julia into a parlour fronting the avenue, Lord Clayton said to him ‘ You do not seem to know your visitor, Sir ?’

‘ I DO not, I confess,’ replied he, ‘ recollect the lady’s face: I can only say that both Mrs. Chapman and myself, will endeavour to make her visit to us agreeable.’

JULIA expressed the pleasure which she received from his polite carriage to her by a most obliging smile, and on Mrs. Chapman’s entrance into the room, civilities of the same nature with those already past were renewed.

LORD CLAYTON then having informed Mr. Chapman who his visitor was, and in what manner she had been separated from her parents, concluded his communications with saying, ‘ I was in hopes, Sir, all the way I came, that I should have found Mr. and Mrs. Meredith here; but though I am not so fortunate, you will, I dare believe, readily take their daughter under your protection till you see them; for you may reasonably expect to see them soon, as they have only been, in all probability, retarded either by accidents upon the road

‘road to the carriage, or by the mistakes of a blundering driver.’

MRS. CHAPMAN, seeing Julia’s eyes moistened with the tears of filial affection, retired with her into another apartment, in order to administer to her all the comfort in her power, under a disappointment which seemed to be insupportable.

LORD CLAYTON, as soon as the ladies had quitted the room, consulted with Mr. Chapman what steps to take in order to produce the wished-for discovery: and in consequence of a plan of operations settled between them, several servants were immediately dispatched on fleet horses to make the most diligent enquiries in different roads.

WHEN the servants returned without having made any successful enquiries, poor Julia fainted away—When she recovered her senses, she broke out into such despairing expressions with regard to the fate of her parents, during the delivery of which her whole frame was violently agitated, that all the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Chapman and Lord Clayton united were insufficient to persuade her not to terrify herself with the dreadful apprehensions of never beholding them again alive—‘I shall never see my dear parents again,’ said the amiable girl, wringing her hands, and throwing up her streaming eyes to Heaven, in the depth of her distress, ‘I shall never see them any more—they are gone—gone for ever—dead—dead—perhaps murdered by the very villain who was

‘ was providentially hindered from accomplishing his brutal designs against *me*.’

HERE the anguish of her mind became so intense, that she fell into another fit, in which she lay a considerable time, and appeared so totally disordered when she came out of it, that it was judged highly necessary, late as it was, to send for a physician who lived a few miles off.

LORD CLAYTON having spent the evening, he could not think of *supping* while his Julia remained in such an alarming condition, at Chapman-Place: he began therefore to make a motion towards his departure from thence, though with a reluctance which was strongly imprinted on every feature in his face.

MR. CHAPMAN, putting himself, like a humane man, in his lordship’s situation, could not perceive *that* reluctance without compassion, and therefore very earnestly pressed him to stay where he was, till the next morning at least—
 ‘ You had better take a bed with us to-night, my lord,’ continued he; ‘ you will only sit moping at home by yourself, as the earl is gone to London, and have a thousand fears about Miss Meredith, who, by following the prescriptions of Dr. Friendly, will, I dare say, feel herself quite another thing to-morrow.’

As Lord Clayton had secretly wished to be detained by his benevolent neighbour, he wanted not a renewal of his persuasions to induce him to continue under his hospitable roof during the remainder of the night.

DOCTOR

DOCTOR FRIENDLY came soon after he was summoned, found his patient better than he expected from the message which he had received from Lord Clayton's servant, assured his lordship that she was not in a dangerous way, and having wrote a few lines in a violent hurry, took his leave with the most animating expressions.

BEFORE morning, however, notwithstanding the doctor's consolations and prescriptions, Julia's fever increased, and she grew delirious.

WHILE she lay in a very affecting state with her intellects extremely disturbed, Mr. and Mrs. Meredith arrived : but she was not capable of being made sensible of their arrival : and, indeed, when her senses returned, it was deemed prudent not to make their arrival known to her with abruptness.

MR. and Mrs Chapman welcomed their old friends in the heartiest manner imaginable, who returned their civilities with equal politeness and cordiality, but with striking marks of disquietude in their faces ; and could not help asking them, as soon as the first civilities were exchanged, if they had seen their daughter, or heard any thing concerning her ?

THE answers which they received to those enquiries filled them with a variety of emotions, at once pleasing and painful, but the latter were predominant ; for, from the tenderness of their Julia's disposition, and the delicacy of her
her

her constitution, they were greatly alarmed at her *described* situation, and their fears were much stronger than their hopes.

LORD CLAYTON, by his behaviour upon the melancholy occasion, rendered himself still more amiable in the eyes of his Julia's fond parents, than he had been before his departure from Ireland, and sincerely proved the fervour of his affection for their most deserving daughter, by the sincerity of his sorrow.

WHEN Julia's fever left her, and she was able to sit up and to converse with her friends as rationally as ever, Lord Clayton undertook the agreeable task of breaking that news to her which had given *him* so much pleasure, so much heart-felt satisfaction; and disclosed it to her in so gradual a manner, with so much address, that it did not overset her spirits, though it threw them into a very great commotion.

WHEN she had repeatedly asked his lordship if his intelligence was true, if her dear parents were actually on the road to Chapman-Place; or if he had not too hastily credited a favourable report about them; and when his lordship had repeatedly assured her that he had not been deceived by any false reports, but that she would really be happy in their embraces in a short time, she fell on her knees, and in lively language, highly suitable to the occasion, returned thanks to the Supreme Disposer of all events, for the transporting felicity which she, at that instant, enjoyed.

LORD CLAYTON, then, raising her from the floor, seated her in her chair with the utmost tenderness : and having pressed her hands in his, looking at the same time very affectionately at her, said, ‘ I may, now, I believe, my dear Julia, venture to inform you, that Mr. and Mrs. Meredith are in *this* house.’

‘ IN *this* house, my lord!’ replied she, gazing earnestly on him—

‘ YES, my lovely angel ; they arrived here a few days ago ; but you was not in a condition to be acquainted with their arrival ; and when your senses returned, we all thought it imprudent to communicate intelligence of so particular a nature, without preparing you for the reception of it. I, therefore, desired to be the person employed to make the necessary preparation, and am happy to find that I have not, through my eagerness to impart to you the delight which I myself felt at the sight of my long-missing friends, occasioned too vehement a shock to your spirits.’

JULIA, having breathed a second effusion full of piety and gratitude to Heaven for the preservation of her parents, turned to Lord Clayton and said, ‘ You have by your kind and prudent carriage, my lord, increased—if it can be increased—the regard to which you are so justly entitled from me ; and I shall ever be ready to acknowledge my obligations.’

‘ NAME them not, my dear Julia, but compose your spirits, which begin, I perceive,
to

‘ to be a little fluttered ; while I go to inform
 ‘ Mr. and Mrs. Meredith of my successful visit
 ‘ to you ; and assure yourself that I shall soon
 ‘ return with them, and enjoy the most pleas-
 ‘ ing satisfaction I ever felt in my life.’

HE then quitted the hand he held in his, in order to forward the interview for which he had so happily planned the way ; but she seizing his coat, cried out, ‘ Oh ! do not go alone, my lord—I am not very strong, indeed, but I will try to walk down stairs—It is my place to go to my parents, and not *theirs* to come to me.’

‘ EXCELLENT creature !’ replied my lord—
 ‘ but I must stop you, my Julia (continued he, re-seating her in her chair)—You are too feeble—I dare not comply with your wishes—If any accident should happen to you from this resolution, I shall never forgive myself.’

WITH those words he left the room, and gave every body below not a little pleasure by relating what had passed above, especially to the amiable pair who were the most interested in what he related ; and, requesting that he might introduce them to their daughter, preceded them to her apartment.

AS soon as he re-entered the room he saw his Julia slowly advancing—for she had quitted her chair on hearing feet upon the stairs coming up—He ran immediately to her, and prevented her from stirring a step farther ; but he could not, without some difficulty, prevent her from moving towards her mother when she ap-

peared behind him. Mr. Meredith soon made *his* appearance too. A very tender scene then followed, in which Julia and her parents shewed themselves in a light equally amiable and affecting.

LORD CLAYTON, when that scene was over, imagining from his Julia's looks, for his eyes were rivetted on her while she poured forth her filial effusions, that she wished to be with her mother in private, took Mr. Meredith aside. They whispered a little together, and then went down stairs.

As soon as Julia perceived herself alone with her mother, she threw her arms round her neck, and said, ' Oh ! how much have I suffered since I was separated from you and my good father !—how transported am I to see you both again !—and how much am I indebted to the humanity and tenderness of Lord Clayton, whom Heaven sent to my relief, when I was in a situation pitiable beyond expression !'

' THE transports which I feel, my dear Julia, said Mrs. Meredith, on your being thus restored to my fond arms, are too exquisite to be described : and I am well assured that your father's feelings on this unexpected and most happy discovery, are similar to mine. To Heaven, indeed, our gratefullest acknowledgements are justly due from us all ; and I must own, I am doubly delighted to hear that the man, who ever since you knew him, merited your esteem by his behaviour to you, has acted in such a manner as to increase it.

' But

‘ But of what kind my dear,’ continued she,
‘ have been your sufferings since our separation,
‘ and from what distressful circumstances did
‘ his lordship relieve you?’

JULIA, then, gave her mother a succinct relation of what had happened to her from the moment of her being retarded by the lameness of her horse, and closed her narrative with the following words—‘ And now, madam, have
‘ not my sufferings been severe? have I not
‘ been cruelly distressed, and have I not reason
‘ to pour out my sincerest thanksgivings to
‘ Heaven, for sending a deliverer to me at so
‘ critical a juncture? Whoever had been my
‘ deliverer I should have felt myself under the
‘ deepest obligations to him; but the appearance of Lord Clayton in that noble character,
‘ certainly heightened the pleasure which I felt
‘ from the prospect of being speedily released
‘ from my painful condition.’

‘ You have, indeed, been particularly favoured by providence—What a wretch!—
‘ Little did I imagine that a man who had behaved for so many years unexceptionably,
‘ would turn out so infamous a fellow—I heartily rejoice at your deliverance, my dear girl;
‘ entirely approve of your sentiments arising from it, and will, in my turn, relate the situations into which your father and I have been
‘ thrown, and the interruptions we have met with from the time that we missed you, without being able to guess at the cause of your delay, or how to discover the road in which
‘ you had been retarded.’

JULIA, having told her mother that she should listen with the utmost attention to a narrative which could not but be very interesting to her, Mrs. Meredith opened it in the subsequent terms :

‘ CONCLUDING that you was not far behind the chaise, as we had frequently seen you on looking out at the windows, we were not disturbed with any apprehensions about you ; but on my putting out my head, in order to beckon you to me, and to desire you to take particular notice of a view which appeared to me the most *picturesque* one I had ever beheld, and not seeing you, Mr. Meredith bade the driver walk his horses a little.

‘ WHEN he had moved slowly on for about a quarter of an hour, without being joined by you, we did indeed begin to be alarmed, and were extremely at a loss how to act, as we had passed several roads during our slow progress, in several directions. At last being overtaken by a countryman, we asked him if he had seen a lady on horseback, attended by her servant. The countryman answering in the affirmative, pointed to the road in which he had left them, and we turned into it immediately, hoping to meet you. We travelled however some hours at a considerable but at an unsuccessful rate. Finding then, upon a second inquiry, that we were at too great a distance from this hospitable place to think of reaching it before the next morning, so far
‘ had

‘ had we been carried out of our way, and
‘ night approaching very fast, we resolved to
‘ stop at a town which was near us, and to
‘ take up with what accommodations we
‘ could procure, for the remainder of the
‘ evening.

‘ WHEN your father was going to quit the
‘ chaise, he felt himself so crippled by having
‘ sat so many hours in a disagreeable posture,
‘ as the narrowness of the carriage would not
‘ admit of his sitting at his ease; that he could
‘ not get out by himself: the man of the house,
‘ therefore, came to assist him; but he and
‘ the driver together found it very necessary to
‘ lend him all the assistance in their power to
‘ prevent him from falling. I too was not a
‘ little fatigued; and as our minds were pretty
‘ equally agitated on *your* account, we spent
‘ our time in a manner the most dissatisfactory
‘ to be imagined.

‘ YOUR father had scarce any rest all night;
‘ and the few slumbers into which I fell were
‘ short and interrupted; and I often started out
‘ of terrifying dreams.

‘ IN the morning, however, when we rose,
‘ we flattered ourselves, after a variety of re-
‘ flections occasioned by our distracting situa-
‘ tion, that you would, most probably, on be-
‘ ing separated from us, ride with the utmost
‘ expedition to Chapman-place, assured of a
‘ hearty welcome there, though not *personally*
‘ known, as your father and I have not seen
‘ Mr. and Mrs. Chapman since you were born,

‘ and therefore ordered our chaise to be got
‘ ready.

‘ JUST as we were on the point of leaving
‘ the town, your father was taken so very ill
‘ that he was obliged to give up all thoughts of
‘ his journey—His gouty sensations were suffi-
‘ cient to render his confinement in a house to
‘ which nothing but the necessity of the mo-
‘ ment would have carried him, thoroughly
‘ miserable; but his reflections super-added en-
‘ tirely deprived him of his usual philosophic
‘ composure, and drew from him many peevish
‘ and some highly passionate expressions, which
‘ contributed, no doubt, to increase the acute-
‘ ness of his bodily complaints. To want the
‘ power to move from a spot when we most
‘ wish to leave it, is surely to be in a condition
‘ much to be pitied—and I could not help
‘ looking on our condition at that time as singu-
‘ larly compassionate—None but parents know
‘ what parents feel in such circumstances. Our
‘ tender regard, and sincere affection for you,
‘ my Julia, gave a poignancy to our disqui-
‘ tudes not to be described, and, for my part,
‘ I was more than once, when the anguish of
‘ my mind was almost insupportable, induced
‘ to envy the childless wife.—Such a day I ne-
‘ ver passed before—and I never shall, I hope,
‘ pass another like it.—Your father frequently
‘ pierced my ears with his cries while he lay
‘ tossing on his pillow, uneasy in every posture,
‘ and I was rooted to the bed-side applying all
‘ the remedies I could procure, and adminis-
‘ tring all the comfort I could think of—
‘ What a trying situation for *him*!—what a
‘ melancholy one for *me*!

‘ THE day was distressful enough; we wanted
‘ no addition to the unhappiness which it brought
‘ to us: but the evening immediately succeeding
‘ it made us still more sensible of our infeli-
‘ city.

‘ IN the middle of the night we were alarm-
‘ ed in a dreadful manner. The room over
‘ our apartment was in flames. A careless ser-
‘ vant had gone to sleep without putting out
‘ her candle, which falling against some linen
‘ curtains soon threw them into a blaze. The
‘ imprudent creature herself, waked by the vio-
‘ lent heat around her, was the first to raise the
‘ family, and by so doing preserved the house;
‘ for *her* room was the only one rendered abso-
‘ lutely useless, so successful were the vigorous
‘ proceedings of her master and his men upon
‘ the pressing occasion. However, before they
‘ had extinguished the flames, nobody, I be-
‘ lieve, suffered more than I did: as soon as I
‘ heard the word fire, the sound of it made me
‘ shudder, but not so much on my own account
‘ as on your father’s, who could not, possibly,
‘ move himself from the dangerous spot.—The
‘ fright had disabled me from lending him any
‘ assistance, and every person belonging to the
‘ inn was too much engaged to think of us. For
‘ some time, therefore, I remained in a state
‘ which I cannot paint in proper colours—Your
‘ good father, ill as he was, seemed to be far
‘ more affected by my appearance than by the
‘ cause of it.—During the moments of uncer-
‘ tainty with regard to the operations above
‘ stairs, my ignorance of your fate, my dear
‘ Julia, almost distracted me—I repeated your
‘ name

‘ name frequently in bewailing accents—I raved
‘ about you—I wished myself out of a world in
‘ which I could no longer expect to enjoy any
‘ happiness—forgetting—ungrateful as I was—
‘ how happy providence had made me in a
‘ husband, the kindest, the tenderest of his
‘ sex.

‘ WHEN our landlord came to inform us that
‘ the flames were extinguished, my fears began
‘ to subside, and my reasoning faculties to re-
‘ turn ; but several hours elapsed before I could
‘ reflect on the agreeable intelligence which he
‘ communicated, without a confusion of ideas.

‘ AFTER this alarming incident, however,
‘ and after I had recovered from the agitation
‘ which it had occasioned, I could not help
‘ wishing for your father’s being able to bear
‘ the motion of the chaise.—Fortunately, to
‘ my extreme satisfaction, he was, in less
‘ than a week, in a travelling condition ; he
‘ came hither alternately animated with hope
‘ and damped with despair.—Thanks to all-
‘ gracious Heaven, we heard on our arrival that
‘ you was safe under this hospitable roof ; and
‘ though we could not but feel a diminution
‘ of our joy when we were informed of
‘ your being confined to your bed, the conside-
‘ ration that we should once more have the hap-
‘ piness of beholding you, and that the sight of
‘ us might, probably, contribute to the return of
‘ your health, flattered us too much to make us
‘ encourage any desponding thoughts. — We
‘ have been here several days without seeing
‘ you, because you have for several days been
‘ prevented by the raging of your fever from
‘ knowing the people who addressed themselves
‘ to

“to you: and even when your fever left you, and
“your senses were restored, our good friends
“here judged, perhaps very prudently, that
“our too sudden appearance before you might
“occasion a relapse, and be attended with fatal
“consequences: in compliance, therefore, with
“their well-meant suggestions, from our first
“coming hither, we have denied ourselves the
“pleasure of seeing you till this morning.”

HERE Mrs. Meredith pausing, tenderly embraced her daughter, and then added, “It gives
“me unspeakable satisfaction, my dear Julia,
“to find you as well as you are, after so severe
“a shock to your constitution, and sincerely
“hope that you will feel every hour an alteration
“in yourself for the better—But why do
“you weep so *now*, my dear? continued she;
“why do you sob thus as if your heart would
“break?”

“I WEEP, madam” said she, in broken accents,
“to think how much you have suffered for my
“sake—can I feel too much for so kind, so affectionate a parent?”

MRS. MEREDITH in return for so filial a speech, of the sincerity of which she was as strongly convinced as she was of her own existence, redoubled her maternal endearments, kissed away the last tears ere they fell on her pallid cheeks, and endeavoured by the most soothing language to prevent her from sinking under her sensibility.

WHILE she was so laudably employed, Mr. Meredith came into the room, and by his paternal

ternal behaviour appeared to the greatest advantage. In a short time after his entrance, however, Mrs. Meredith believing that rest would be of more service to Julia than a continuance of *their* conversation, she informed her husband of her sentiments, and in consequence of his declaring the propriety of them, they left her to the care of her nurse, that she might, by having nobody with her to occasion an exertion of her spirits, drop into a refreshing slumber.

IN a few days afterwards Lord Clayton received an express from Bromley-house which required his immediate departure, and he set off, when he had taken leave of his agreeable friends at Chapman-place, of his Julia in particular, who mended very fast, with uncommon alacrity, because his father's letter encouraged him to imagine that he should soon make his re-appearance among them happier than he had ever yet been.

LORD BROMLEY, on his arrival in town, gave Mr. Merrick no small pleasure by acquainting him with the occasion of his journey. 'George's behaviour, my dear Merrick,' said he, 'was so dutiful and affectionate during my illness, that I am determined to give up the five thousand pounds to Jarvis rather than make so good a son unhappy by pressing him to marry a girl whom he could not bring himself to like as a wife.'

'You could not have come to town, my lord, on a better errand,' replied Mr. Merrick; 'but I must beg leave to desire your
lordship

‘ lordship to delay the execution of your commendable design, because I have hit on a way of promoting my nephew’s happiness, and of saving your lordship’s money at the same time.’

As no man loved money more than Lord Bromley, the latter part of Mr. Merrick’s speech sounded very agreeably in his ear ; but as he was conscious of having promised upon his honour, to advance the sum above-mentioned in case of Lord Clayton’s marrying any woman except Miss Jarvis, he was at a loss to conceive in what way he could be *honourably* released from his promise, without the payment of it.

MR. JARVIS and his Molly, whose meeting together after a very long absence, was described towards the latter end of the first volume, finished the day like the happiest couple in the conjugal state ; but as they were not legally united, though their hearts were closely linked by love, Molly retired to her lodgings at Mrs. Jones’s, to which Mr. Jarvis attended her, in spite of all she could urge with regard to the needlessness of such a proceeding, as his servant would be sufficient to protect her from any impertinence in the streets between the two houses, which were too public to be dangerous.

At these lodgings Mrs. Barton remained till Mr. Jarvis called on her to make her his wife. When the marriage-ceremony was performed he carried her down, with Harriot, to his seat near Bath.

MR. MERRICK having called at Mr. Jarvis's house soon after his departure, was not a little chagrined at his disappointment, on his nephew's account; though he was very glad to find that he had married the very woman whom he ought to have married so many years before. Being however not of a disposition to postpone the execution of any scheme he had conceived (this turn of mind in him has, I believe, been already mentioned) he resolved to go down to Ravens-Nest. Accordingly he set out from Bromley-house the next morning, and left the earl at the same time pretty much puzzled to guess what would be the result of his visit to that place.

BEING obliged to stop for a temporary complaint at a public house about half way to Bath, he overheard, while he was taking the refreshment which had always agreed with him, a conversation which insensibly attracted his attention, because the word *Jarvis* was frequently mentioned in it. A father and a son were, he soon discovered, the speakers: and as he knew that Harriot was engaged to a young gentleman of whom her father did not approve, he thought he might by making his appearance before them, see perhaps the Mr. Harrison to whose name he was no stranger, though he was not personally known to him.

IN this way of thinking, he, with several apologies for his intrusion, entered the room from which the sounds issued which had sharpened his curiosity, and advancing to the elder gentleman,

tleman, asked, him very politely if his name was Harrison.

‘ It is, Sir.’

‘ AND this young gentleman is your son, Sir?’

‘ YES, Sir.’

‘ AND in love with Miss Jarvis, the daughter of Mr. Jarvis, of Ravens-Nest in Somersetshire?’

‘ YES, Sir—But pray give me leave to ask you, in my turn, why you question me so closely, and with an earnestness as if you was, though I never saw you before, Sir, interested in my affairs?’

I CERTAINLY never saw you, Sir, till now,’ replied Mr. Merrick with a complacent countenance; ‘ but I cannot help being desirous, notwithstanding, of an acquaintance with you. However, to convince you that I have not thus introduced myself to you merely to satisfy an inquisitive temper, I will tell you who I am, and what I come about.—And you Sir,’ continued he, turning to the young gentleman, ‘ will not be sorry, I fancy, when I have made my discoveries. My name is Merrick, I am nearly related to the earl of Bromley: he married my sister; but that is neither here nor there—His lordship and Mr. Jarvis have, for some time, been laying their heads together to make an alliance between their families, which I am endeavouring to prevent,

‘ prevent, because my nephew Lord Clayton
 ‘ cannot bring himself to marry Miss Jarvis ;
 ‘ (the truth is he is desperately in love with another lady) and as Miss Jarvis has as little inclination for his lordship as he has for her, I
 ‘ am willing to kill two birds with one stone,
 ‘ by trying to prevail on her father not only to
 ‘ give up all thoughts of urging her to marry
 ‘ the man for whom she feels no tender sensations, but to give his consent to her being united to him who has gained her affections.
 ‘ Now, Sir,’ added he, addressing himself to young Harrison, ‘ as you are that man, I will
 ‘ use my utmost efforts to make you both happy
 ‘ in the marriage-state ; I delight in making
 ‘ people happy : I am never so well pleased as
 ‘ when I am doing something to promote the
 ‘ felicity of my fellow creatures.’

THE younger Mr. Harrison bowed his thanks to Mr. Merrick : the flutterings of hope, at that instant, hindered him from articulating them : the elder, after having complimented him upon his philanthropy, paid him proper acknowledgments for having his son’s happiness so much at heart.

As Mr. Harrison and his son were going to Bath, on particular business, Mr. Merrick proceeded with them towards that city, and exhibited during their journey several additional proofs of the benevolence of his disposition.

AT Bath Mr. Merrick took leave of his travelling companions when they had heartily wished him success in his friendly undertaking, and

and when he had assured *them* that he would spare no pains to bring Mr. Jarvis to consent to make his daughter happy, according to her ideas of conjugal felicity, however different from *his own*.

MR. MERRICK was not only very politely received but cordially welcomed at Raven's-Nest, and the whole Jarvis-family seemed to be highly and equally pleased with his arrival. Full of the business which had occasioned his appearance there, he availed himself of the first opportunity to closet Mr. Jarvis, and to open the design of his visit to him. When they were closetted, he addressed himself to him in the following terms: ' My dear Mr. Jarvis, as you have now made Mrs. Barton all the amends in your power for her many severe sufferings on your account (in doing which you have, indeed, but barely done your duty, for she certainly, from the moment she became your mistress deserved to be your wife) you will not, I hope, throw her into new affliction by denying your daughter the happiness which she herself at present enjoys, that is, the happiness of being inseparably united to the man whom she prefers to all other men in the world: especially as the person who has made a very deep impression on your daughter's heart is by no means unworthy of being nearly related to you.'

' I PERFECTLY understand what you mean, Sir,' replied Mr. Jarvis, ' and I dare say you will not be sorry to hear that I am quite ready to release Lord Bromley from the promise which I drew from him with regard to
' the

‘the forfeiture of five thousand pounds, by re-
 ‘admitting the addresses of Mr. Harrison to
 ‘my daughter, whom I once encouraged, but
 ‘whom I very genteelly, flattered with the
 ‘prospect of a splendid alliance, afterwards re-
 ‘jected. My dear Molly has infused better
 ‘sentiments into my mind than I had before
 ‘she was restored to me. Actuated with those
 ‘sentiments, I shall with pleasure, in a short
 ‘time, wait on his lordship, and cancel all
 ‘agreements between us, to his no small satis-
 ‘faction, I imagine, as well as to Lord
 ‘Clayton’s.’

‘AND to mine, Sir,’ interrupted Mr. Mer-
 rick, ‘for Lord Bromley and my nephew have
 ‘both endured a great deal of uneasiness about
 ‘that same forfeiture: and the removal of
 ‘any uneasiness from them will be a satisfacti-
 ‘on to me. Lord Bromley, Sir, *thinks* now
 ‘as a father, so much more justly than he did
 ‘a month ago, that he would pay ten thousand
 ‘pounds rather than desire his son to make
 ‘himself miserable in the marriage-state in
 ‘compliance with *his* particular *humour*.’

‘THERE is no occasion for his lordship to
 ‘advance a shilling,’ said Mr. Jarvis; ‘for as
 ‘I shall break off the projected match, the
 ‘forfeiture will be of course annulled.’

MR. MERRICK, then, related to Mr. Jarvis
 what he had overheard at the house at which
 he had stopped upon the road; and what passed
 during the subsequent interview, repeating as
 much of the conversation on the side of Mr.
 Harrison and his son as would he thought tend

to accelerate the renewal of their visits to Raven's-Nest.

HERE ended the closet-scene between Mr. Jarvis and Mr. Merrick, the former of whom went immediately to make his wife and daughter happy by imparting the result of it to them, while the latter retired to communicate the issue of his negotiations to Bromley-house with his pen.

WHEN he had dispatched his letter to the nearest post-town, he prevailed on Mr. Jarvis to consent to take a ride with him to Bath, and to throw himself, as it were accidentally, into Mr. Harrison's way, that an acquaintance might be revived between them, without an awkwardness on either side.

THEY met in the rooms.

As soon as Mr. Harrison saw Mr. Merrick he advanced towards him with a smiling countenance ; but perceiving Mr. Jarvis a little behind him, felt a slight emotion of resentment. Concluding, however, from the turn of Mr. Merrick's features that he had succeeded according to his wishes, he tried to stifle *that* emotion, and prepared to receive the person by whom he had been, he thought, unhand- somely treated in a forgiving manner.

MR. JARVIS, on his part, was somewhat abashed at the sight of a gentleman with whom he had *trifled*, and to whom he had behaved not at all like a man of sense or a man of honour ; but by the dextrous mediation of Mr. Merrick,

Merrick, the resentment of the one and the shame of the other were soon put to flight, and a cordial conversation was carried on between them.

YOUNG HARRISON in about half an hour joined them. Mr. Jarvis gave him a great deal of pleasure by his behaviour to him, and he *looked* his thanks very significantly to Mr. Merrick for it: justly considering himself much obliged to the latter for the behaviour of the former.

MR. JARVIS, in a few days, quitted Bath, but not till he had pressingly invited both the Harrisons to favour him with their company at Raven's-Nest, when they had finished the business which had brought them to that place; and they gladly promised to accept of this kind invitation as soon as they were at liberty.

MR. MERRICK at the same time set off towards London.

LORD BROMLEY received him with open arms, and with a face strongly expressive of inward satisfaction: My dear Merrick,' said he, 'you are an admirable negociator: you have brought me out of a devilish bad scrape with infinite address: and so Jarvis and the Harrisons are upon good terms again?'

'THE best in the world, my lord' said Mr. Merrick: 'they met at Bath; indeed, I contrived to bring them together: and I think myself very happy in being able to tell your lordship that things are in a very fair train for
' the

‘ the promotion of an union between the young
‘ folks, to whom I heartily wish all the happi-
‘ ness in wedlock which they themselves can
‘ possibly desire; for they are both of them
‘ good creatures, and seem to be made for
‘ each other.—You are thoughtful, my
‘ lord.’

‘ I WANT to see my son, Merrick—I
‘ sent an express to him yesterday morning,
‘ after the perusal of your letter.—

‘ YESTERDAY, my lord! did not you re-
‘ ceive it till yesterday?

‘ THE evening before.’

‘ THEN it was a d—d while upon the road,
‘ or put into a wrong bag.—However, as long
‘ as your lordship has got it—I want also to see
‘ my nephew—Now, my lord, I hope you
‘ will follow Mr. Jarvis’s example, and make
‘ the conjugal happiness of your only child
‘ your principal concern.’

‘ I WISH to see George,’ replied his lordship,
‘ on purpose to shew myself worthy of the proofs
‘ which I have ever received of his affection
‘ and duty—George is a deserving young fel-
‘ low—I have not used him well; but I will
‘ use him better for the future—If the Mere-
‘ diths were in England now, my dear Mer-
‘ rick!—

‘ I HAVE reason to believe that they are, my
‘ lord.’

‘ Say

‘ SAY you so ? have you heard of their arrival ?’

MR. MERRICK then related the part of Mrs. Barton’s story concerning the Merediths, and added, ‘ Whether they are still at Chester, my lord, I cannot pretend to say ; but if Lord Clayton, on his arrival, should bring no intelligence picked up by chance about them, I will gladly accompany him to that place.’

THE next day Lord Clayton arrived at Bromley-house.

LORD BROMLEY, having embraced his son in the most affectionate manner, told him that he never was so glad to see him in his life, because he had determined no longer to oppose his inclination with regard to the marriage-state. ‘ Mr. Jarvis and myself, my dear George, have both been precipitate, I wish I could not say also very unkind, parents, but our eyes are at last opened (your good uncle has, I believe, greatly contributed to the change in our sentiments, and as *he* has re-admitted the addresses of Mr. Harrison to his daughter, I am of course released from my forfeiture. Had I broke off the engagements between us, I should have been, in honour, bound to pay the stipulated sum. Your uncle will relate the whole affair to you, for he is just come from Raven’s-Nest—Do, Merrick, relate it.’

MR. MERRICK accordingly delivered a faithful narrative of what had occurred concerning the Jarvis’s and the Harrisons during his stay in
Somersetshire ;

Somerſetſhire; and by that narrative filled his nephew's boſom with the moſt pleaſing ſenſations.

TURNING to his father, Lord Clayton ſaid, 'How happy am I, my lord, to find you releaſed, honourably releaſed, from a promiſe, the remembrance of which began to give you no ſmall diſquietude! Doubly happy am I to find your lordſhip diſpoſed to make my inclination and my duty act in conjunction.' Then, addreſſing himſelf to his uncle, he added, 'To you, Sir, my obligations'—

'I WILL not hear of them, my lord,' replied Mr. Merrick, abruptly; 'we have ſomething elſe to talk of now—Have you picked up any intelligence in your excuſions about Miſs Meredith; for I am pretty well aſſured that ſhe, with her father and mother, was at Cheſter not many weeks ago?'

THIS queſtion produced a full account of her unfortunate adventure, and of the ſubſequent ſcene at Chapman-Place, to which Lord Bromley and Mr. Merrick were extremely attentive.

WHEN Lord Clayton had cloſed his relation, his father ſaid to him, 'Well, George, you have certainly deſerved Miſs Meredith's heart, by having ſaved her honour when it was in ſuch imminent danger; and though I have not the pleaſure of knowing her perſonally, I am thoroughly perſuaded from what you have ſaid concerning her (I can depend upon any thing you ſay George) that I ſhall be, when I ſee her, as much prejudiced in her favour as you

‘ you are : I hope to see her soon, added his lordship, for we will set off to Cheshire to-morrow morning : do you relish this scheme, George ?’

‘ You would be very much disappointed, I believe, my lord,’ replied he, smiling, ‘ if I should start any objection to it ; I beg leave, therefore, to tell your lordship that the return to Cheshire will be in the highest agreeable to me.’

MR. MERRICK, however, though he by no means disapproved of Lord Bromley’s desire to see Miss Meredith, could not help advising his lordship to postpone his journey, till he had received a visit from Mr. Jarvis, which might be every day rationally expected ; and his reasons for such a piece of advice appeared so cogent, that his lordship was so far influenced by them, as to resolve to stay in town till the visit in question was paid. ‘ I will wait till I have seen him, Merrick ;’ said the earl : ‘ but you, George,’ added he, turning to his son, ‘ may as well go down ; probably, I may follow you in a few days : certainly, I will as soon as Jarvis has been with me.’

LORD CLAYTON wanted not to be pressed to leave London : he, therefore, threw himself into a post-chaise the next morning, accompanied by his uncle, who longed to see his old friends.

THE day after his departure Mr. Jarvis made his appearance at Bromley-House.

LORD

LORD BROMLEY and his expected visitor looked rather embarrassed at each other, on their first salutation, both feeling as if they had taken steps with regard to their children which could not stand the test of cool reflection. Their mutual embarrassment, however, was momentary : they soon proceeded to business ; behaving like a couple of good parents who wished to see their children happy, and who were ready to rectify the mistaken notions which they had entertained about *their* felicity.

LORD BROMLEY and Mr. Jarvis being reciprocally satisfied with the transactions of the afternoon, the former so earnestly intreated the latter to finish the evening with him, that he could not handsomely avoid accepting of his lordship's invitation, having had really no engagement on his hands.

As the remembrance of what they had been settling together gave them more spirits than they had on their meeting, they spent the evening very chearfully ; and when they separated, each wished the other the highest pleasure possible, from the intended addition to his family.

MR. JARVIS, having been more free with his bottle than he had been a great while, found himself so extremely exhilarated, that he could not help attacking every woman he met with, in the street, in the more exalted strains of romantic gallantry. To many women those strains were not unacceptable, though they came from a man evidently in a state of intoxi-

cation ; nor did the liberties which he took with them in consequence of his joyous feelings, provoke their resentment. But unluckily for him, while he was dancing (for he was much too merry to walk) across Hanover-Square, he addressed his amorous nonsense to a lady who sauntered soberly along, leaning upon her husband's arm, and had no relish for his rapturous effusions : instead of giving him any encouragement, therefore, she called him an impertinent coxcomb, and desired him to go about his business ; which words were accompanied with others of a less digestible nature, from her companion.

‘ WHAT do you mean, Sir ?’ said Mr. Jarvis, ‘ what do you mean by calling me a scoundrel ? I am no more a scoundrel than yourself, Sir, d—n me if I am.’

THIS speech, though Mr. Jarvis delivered it in fierce accents, standing with his arms akimbow, in a swaggering attitude, did not in the least intimidate the gentleman to whom it was directed.

‘ THE man who offers to be rude to a lady under the protection of her husband, Sir,’ replied he, ‘ is a scoundrel, and deserves to have his nose pulled for his insolence.’

‘ UPON my soul, Sir,’ said Jarvis briskly, ‘ you are the first man that ever talked to me in this way, and so I demand satisfaction on the spot.’

‘ SATISFACTION,

‘SATISFACTION, Sir!’ replied the other coolly, ‘what satisfaction? I am the offended person, as I conceive, not *you*.’

‘THE satisfaction of a gentleman, Sir, and I *will* have it by—’

‘WHEN you have *deserved* such satisfaction, Sir, you may *demand* it, but not till then.’

THE gentleman having spoken those few words emphatically, and being alarmed about his wife who stood trembling by his side, and earnestly conjured him not to stay quarrelling with a madman, walked on with her: but before they had walked twenty yards, Mr. Jarvis stopped their progress.

‘AND so, Sir, you think to sneak off, do you, Sir? after you have treated me with language which no man of honour can put up with?’—At that instant his sword started from the scabbard, and he added, ‘Draw and be d—d.’

THE gentleman, though he had given many indisputable proofs of his personal courage, was sorry to find himself under a necessity of fighting with his antagonist: being willing to impute his behaviour, reprehensible as it was, to the liquor which he had drank, and not to the natural licentiousness of his disposition, unchecked by the remonstrances of discretion: however, as his life was in danger, he *drew* immediately to defend it.

THE lady, frightened to see them actually engaged, ran away screaming ‘Murder.’

‘WHERE, where, madam?’ cried a watchman, who met her as he was going his rounds.

‘OH! for God’s sake,’ said she, ‘come this way, my poor Mr. Strutton will be murdered by a madman.’ She hardly knew what she said, and instinct rather than reason brought her back to the spot on which she had left her husband, defending himself against the passes of his adversary.

THE watchman, advancing closely to Mrs. Strutton, knew *her*, as she lived in a neighbouring street, though she did not, terrified as she was, recollect *his* face; and followed her with a particular alacrity, hoping that his good master had ‘come to no mischief.’

A VERY melancholy sight presented itself to Mrs. Strutton on her return. Her husband lay wounded on the ground, bleeding fast—His antagonist, sobered by the success of his sword-arm, was standing over him, lamenting his unhappy fate, and cursing his own rashness which had hurried him to act the atrocious part of a murderer.

‘YOUR husband, madam, is wounded by this villainous hand,’ said he, stretching it out, ‘but I hope, and believe, not mortally; though he is unable to speak to you—’

‘OH! he is dead—he is dead!’—

‘Do

‘Do not be too much alarmed, Madam,’ replied he, ‘I do assure you that he is not dead, and beg you would give me leave to see him safely conveyed home. Run for a chair, this moment, honest fellow,’ continued he, turning to the watchman, who went off directly, calling ‘Chair, chair,’ as loud as he could bawl.

MR. JARVIS then re-addressing himself to Mrs. Strutton, said to her, on her loading him with some cruel epithets for having thirsted for the life of a man who had never done him the least injury, ‘Your concern for your husband, Madam, *just* as it certainly is, transports you too much against me: I might have left your husband in this distressful situation; but whatever you may think of me, I scorn to do so base an action: I have, I freely own, been greatly to blame: I sincerely repent of what I have done, and will lend you all the necessary assistance in my power upon the disagreeable occasion.’

STRUCK with the truth of the assertion in the former, and mollified with the contrition discovered in the latter part of that speech, Mrs. Strutton accepted of his proffered assistance, and begged him to raise her husband, while she endeavoured to recal him to life, by putting a bottle of salts to his nostrils.

THAT application answered the end proposed: Mr. Strutton soon opened his eyes, and, in about two minutes afterwards, his lips.

SEEING his antagonist officiously employed in helping his wife to stop the blood streaming from his side, he said to him, 'Fly, Sir, and save yourself—I forgive you—may heaven forgive you—'

'I shall never forgive myself, Sir,' replied Mr. Jarvis, pressing his hand; 'nor shall I feel a moment's satisfaction till your surgeon assures me that you are out of danger. As to flight—I abhor the very idea of it—I have acted like a madman in compelling you to draw your sword in your own defence, and if——'

HERE he was prevented from going on by the arrival of the watchman, followed by a chair, and attended also by two constables, who, seizing Mr. Jarvis, informed him very roughly, that he was *their* prisoner. 'If the gentleman dies, you must be tucked up,' said one—'Ay, and he will deserve to be turned off,' added the other, 'for he looks like a d—dmischievous fellow.' The watchman, by the manner in which he had related the affair, probably occasioned the utterance of such illiberal language. They suffered him, however, to help Mr. Strutton into the chair, and then hurried him to a lodging in which he little expected to find himself when he quitted Bromley-house.

As soon as Mr. Strutton was carefully carried home, a surgeon in the neighbourhood, whom they occasionally made use of, came in a short time after he was sent for. When he had examined the wound, he declared that
though

though it was deep, it had not the appearance of a dangerous one: having finished the dressing, and strongly hinted the necessity there was for his patient's being kept quiet, as he had a little fever upon him, retired, hoping to find him better in the morning.

WHEN the surgeon was gone, Mrs. Strutton sent away a servant to an apothecary of whose skill they had a very high opinion, and who had made up medicines for them with success for several years.

MR. BARKER confirmed what Mr. Lancey had said with regard to the fever; and assured Mr. Strutton, that he believed it would rise to no alarming height when he had taken what he should, without delay, order for him.

MR. STRUTTON, however, notwithstanding the well-meant consolatory speeches of the anovementioned gentlemen, spent a very restless night.

MR. JARVIS, being too well acquainted with the world (with life, according to the *bon ton* among the *bucks* of the age) and having been too often in the hands of constables not to know how to deal with them, disposed of his silver in such a manner that he was as genteelly treated in his new apartment as a gentleman could be in his situation.

IN the morning he dispatched a letter to Lord Bromley, who, after having read it with surprize and concern, made him a visit, and answered

answered for his appearance if Mr. Strutton died of his wound.

MR. JARVIS, on being set at liberty, went directly to Mr. Strutton's; but to his inexpressible affliction, was told by the servant who opened the door, that his master was light-headed.

'How unhappy you make me by saying so! but may I not speak with your lady?'

'SHE is too ill to see any body, Sir.'

'BUT she will, perhaps, see me. Tell her that the unfortunate cause of her just affliction waits, most sincerely wishing to administer all the consolation in his power to her under her sufferings.'

'I DARE not let her know that you are in the house, Sir: pray Sir, do not ask me why.'

'NAY, now you have so strongly excited my curiosity, that I must insist upon your explaining yourself.'
'To tell you the truth then, Sir, my mistress has given me particular orders to shut the door against you.'

As Mr. Jarvis could not, by any means whatever, extort any other answer from the servant, he was obliged to retreat with an additional weight to that already hanging upon his mind.

WHEN he arrived at his own house, he threw himself upon a sofa, and having sat some time, stung with the most poignant reflections, wrote the following lines to his wife:

To Mrs. J A R V I S.

‘ My dearest Molly,
‘ WHEN I left you last Friday I was the happiest of men—I am now wretched beyond expression: doubly wretched, because I deserve to be so. O how torturing are the pangs of a guilty conscience!

‘ I SUPPED with Lord Bromley last night, and never spent a more chearful evening—But how shall I relate what happened to me afterwards! I shudder at the remembrance of it.

‘ ELEVATED with the wine which I had drunk, I very indiscreetly attacked, in my way home, a lady who was walking under the care of her husband; and upon *his* resenting my behaviour to *her*, laid him under a necessity of drawing in his own defence—We fought not long: I soon disarmed him; but not till I had deeply wounded him in the side. He fell at my feet and fainted. I am half mad to think of my rashness—O Molly, into what a dreadful condition have I plunged myself!—If Mr. Strutton dies—I cannot bear the thought—I called this morning to see him, he was delirious—I wished to be admitted to his lady: she would not see me—How could I suppose that she would admit the murderer

‘ of her husband !—murderer !—Is there not
‘ something singularly horrid in the sound of
‘ *that* word ? I shall never behold again either
‘ Hanover-square, in which I acted so criminal
‘ a part, or George-street, in which Mr. Strutton
‘ lives, without feeling the keenest self-re-
‘ proaches—and yet I ought to have those
‘ places ever in my mind, to warm me against
‘ the indulgence of passions productive of so
‘ much misery in the world.

‘ SUCH, my dear Molly, is my present
‘ racking situation—Blameable have I been in
‘ the highest degree ; but am I not also an
‘ object of pity ?—To *you* I shall certainly ap-
‘ pear in a *pardonable* light. I was, it is true,
‘ not in the full possession of my reasoning pow-
‘ ers when I provoked Mr. Strutton to fight with
‘ me ; but as I had with my own hand weaken-
‘ ed those powers, how poorly shall I apologize
‘ for my conduct, by pleading the imperfection
‘ of human nature ! The most abandoned wretch
‘ who has justly merited a halter, would as just-
‘ ly merit a reprieve after condemnation, if
‘ such a plea was not an affront to human un-
‘ derstanding.

‘ I AM going to send to Mr. Strutton’s, ho-
‘ ping to hear he is better——

‘ HE is worse—O Molly ! come and com-
‘ fort me under this heavy affliction, for I can-
‘ not yet think of leaving London—Come, but
‘ do not let your compassion for me flutter your
‘ spirits so much as to injure your health.—I am
‘ very unhappy. Adieu—Bring Harriot with
‘ you,

and Miss Meredith.

“you, that I may have those whom I love most
“in this world about me ; and believe me to
“be,

“Your affectionate husband,

THOMAS JARVIS.

WHEN this letter arrived at Raven's-Nest, it occasioned some moving scenes. Mrs. Jarvis, alarmed at the contents of it, imagining from her husband's descriptions of his situation, that his own life was in no small danger, so forcible were her fears, by turns wept, prayed, and raved over them, and was indeed, for a great while, not in a condition to undertake the requested journey. Harriot behaved upon the melancholy occasion in a manner uncommonly amiable, and gave, at the same time, the strongest and the most endearing proofs of her filial affection.

WHEN Mrs. Jarvis was composed enough to order the necessary preparations for her journey, she and Harriot received a considerable addition to their distress from the natural softness of their dispositions, from their sympathetic sensibility, by the arrival of a young lady, who came in a violent agitation of mind to know the name of the gentleman dangerously wounded by Mr. Jarvis ; having heard from the servants of the family that he lived somewhere near Hanover-square.

ON being informed that his name was Strutton, and that he lived in George-street, she sunk to the floor in a swoon.

HERE

HERE was a scene sufficient to excite compassion in the cold breast of *Indifference*.

HARRIOT flew to her relief, and Mrs. Jarvis for some moments forgot her own sorrows, while she assisted her daughter in succouring a fellow-creature, a female one too, apparently bereft of life by the words which she herself had uttered, without apprehending in the least, that they would have proved so fatal to the hearer of them.

WHEN the young lady, after many powerful applications, was roused from her torpid state, and she recovered her speech, she murmured out, 'My poor father, my poor father'—She could say no more, being again deprived of motion and articulation.

THOSE few words went like daggers to the bosom of Mrs. Jarvis: the most unwelcome contents of her husband's letter all crowded into her mind, and she could not help reflecting, with horror reflecting, on the complicated misery which his rashness had occasioned.

ON the second recovery of her senses, Miss Strutton, clasping Mrs. Jarvis's hand very eagerly, said, 'I am doubly grieved, Madam, in finding that I have gratified my curiosity so much at your expence: but my feelings for the best of fathers overpowered me. You want no addition to your concern, Madam, on Mr. Jarvis's account. I shall increase it by staying with you: I will, therefore, remove from

‘from your sight on object which cannot but
‘give you uneasiness. I must return to Mr.
‘Collier’s, with whom I have been only a
‘week, and consult with her about returning
‘to London, for I shall not be able to remain
‘at such a distance from a dying parent.’

MRS. COLLIER lived a few miles from Raven’s-Nest : but being in a bad state of health, made no visits ; and Miss Clinton her niece, was so fond of her, that she rarely left her but to change the scene a little with some intimate friend in the neighbourhood. Captain Clinton, her brother, was expected from Gibraltar every hour, when the abovementioned intelligence was communicated to the mistress of his heart ; for between him and Miss Strutton there had for several years subsisted a tender regard for each other, which was encouraged by the nearest relations they both had in the world. Captain Clinton and his sister were both orphans.

As soon as Miss Strutton returned to Mrs. Collier’s, Miss Clinton seeing her advance towards the house with a pale and dejected countenance, wanted not to be acquainted with the cause of that paleness and that dejection ; for knowing on what errand her friend set out, she was naturally prompted to imagine that the gentleman wounded by Mr. Jarvis, was her father.

‘My fears were but too well grounded, my
‘dear Lavinia ; my father lies in a doubtful, if
‘not a hopeless, condition. Mrs. Jarvis would
‘not own that he is mortally wounded, but I
‘am afraid I shall never see him again alive.

‘However,

‘ However, I will endeavour to see him before he dies. Your good aunt will, I dare say, pardon my abrupt departure.—Where is she, my dear?’

‘ IN her dressing-room.’

‘ THERE is no time to lose,’ said Sophy, and went up stairs immediately.

MRS. COLLIER was very much shocked at the information which Miss Strutton brought her, and could not wonder at her being desirous of going to London. Not chusing, however, to send her with only a servant, she tried to induce her to wait till she received a letter from her mother: Mrs. Strutton, continued she, would certainly have sent for you directly, if your father had been in the dangerous way you imagine him to be. Till you hear from her, therefore, my dear, you ought not, I think, to encourage the most gloomy conjectures.

FINDING, however, that neither her arguments nor persuasions were sufficient to remove her dispiriting apprehensions, Mrs. Collier consented to her departure. A post-chaise was therefore ordered, and Sophy left her amiable friend, gently chiding her for her precipitation. Before her setting out, Mrs. Collier ordered one of her servants, a very faithful fellow, not to lose sight of the chaise upon the road.

ABOUT the same time Mrs. Jarvis and Harriot entered upon *their* journey: they travelled quick, and arrived safe.

MRS.

MRS. JARVIS, having from the contents of her husband's letter worked herself up into a belief that Mr. Strutton would be a dead man before she could get to town, was a very melancholy companion to her daughter during the journey, who said every thing she could think of to comfort her ; and when on her arrival she entered the room in which Mr. Jarvis she was told was sitting, she had little more life in her than a corpse : she tottered, and looked ready to fall at every step. In such a situation, how great, how agreeable was her surprize to see Mr. Jarvis coming towards her with a smile upon his face, and to hear him say, folding her in his arms, ' Oh ! my dearest Molly, I am quite ' transported at the sight of you : I am only ' sorry to think of my having written so alarm- ' ing a letter to you : but banish all distracting ' apprehensions, my love, for Mr. Strutton is ' pronounced to be out of danger, and to be in ' a fair way of doing well : his fever is off, and ' his wound, his surgeon tells me, has a very ' kindly appearance.'

THIS speech of Mr. Jarvis's was truly of the animating kind to his alarmed wife, who had not expected so satisfactory a reception : it was also almost too much for her to bear : the pleasure, indeed, which she felt, while the last word vibrated on her ear, was so painful, that having been just able to utter, in broken accents, ' I am sincerely rejoiced to hear you say so'—her head fell upon his shoulder.

IN a few moments, however, (during which Harriot, and her father were tenderly employed about her) she gently raised it again, and returning his affectionate embrace, added, ‘ Pardon me, my dear Mr. Jarvis, for not having had strength enough to bear your reviving news in a more becoming manner. Terrified as I was with your letter, I came to town with a heaviness upon my spirits not to be described; but now—it is all over, and I congratulate you on the favourable account you have heard concerning Mr. Strutton—But don’t deceive me—tell me the truth—is he really like to be cured of his wound?’

‘ He is, he is, my dear Molly; I don’t deceive you—I never will deceive you again.’

‘ I AM thoroughly satisfied then.’

‘ I AM not satisfied with myself, Molly; who can be satisfied with himself unless he so far keeps his passions in subjection as to prevent them from running away with him? But I will hold a stricter rein over them for the future.—How often have I suffered the brute to get the better of the man? How often—’

‘ WELL, my dear,’ said Mrs Jarvis, interrupting him, ‘ don’t reproach yourself any more now: great allowances will always be made by those who are not too proud to acknowledge themselves to be imperfect beings, for the involuntary deviations from the paths of discretion, occasioned by a temporary suspension of our rational powers; and a sincere repentance
‘ after

‘ after such deviations ought certainly to be considered as no small atonement for them.’

‘ You have a charming way of thinking, my dear Molly,’ said Mr. Jarvis, ‘ but such conduct is not so frequently to be met with in the world as one would wish to find it.’

THE next morning Mr. Jarvis received a visit from Lord Bromley, who congratulated him also on the probable recovery of Mr. Strutton in a short time. Having paid his compliments to Mrs. and Miss Jarvis (without, however, taking notice of the marriage of the former, not deeming it delicate to remind her of her late situation) and chatted about an hour on the reigning topics, he took his leave with a second volley of congratulatory speeches, in order to prepare for his journey to Cheshire. When he got home he found a letter from Lord Clayton, dated from Chapman-place, which contained the following lines :

To the Right Hon. the Earl of Bromley, at
Bromley-house, London.

My Lord,

AFTER having expressed so much satisfaction at the conclusion of the interview between Mr. Jarvis and Mr. Merrick, for reasons too obvious to be mentioned by me, and no little pleasure on my being able to return to this place with happier sensations than I left it, you will, I dare say, be sorry to hear, that on my arrival here this afternoon, I met with a considerable disappointment—

(HAH !

(HAH ! I wonder what !)

‘ MR. MEREDITH set off yesterday morning
‘ to take possession of the estate in Yorkshire,
‘ fallen to him by the death of his brother, with
‘ Mrs. Meredith and my amiable Julia.

(A DISAPPOINTMENT indeed ! I am sorry
for it ; but am glad I was not the cause
of it.)

‘ HAD I not been detained on the road I
‘ should have seen Miss Meredith before her
‘ departure ; and should have, I am well assu-
‘ red, made her happy, by communicating to
‘ her what I had heard during my stay in
‘ town.

(WHAT an unlucky affair !)

‘ OUR chaise was overturned upon the road,
‘ by the violent efforts of the driver, to outstrip
‘ another carriage ; and after it was put in a
‘ travelling condition, my uncle’s bruises con-
‘ fined him to the first inn we could reach two
‘ days. Gratitude, as well as affection, strong-
‘ ly prompted me not to proceed without him :
‘ I could not possibly bring myself to leave so
‘ kind a relation, eager as I was to fly to my
‘ Julia. I therefore staid till he was well enough
‘ to go on, and by so doing met with the a-
‘ bovementioned disappointment.

‘ YOUR lordship, making proper allowances
‘ for the agitated state of a lover’s mind, will
‘ not,

‘ not, I hope, be offended at my resolution, to endeavour, by riding night and day, to overtake the Meredith-family. Consider, my lord, how much time I should lose by coming to inform you, by word of mouth, of my determinations ; and be assured that I will return to pay my dutiful respects to you, as soon as I have made *her*, in whose favour you now, I flatter myself, feel prejudices, thoroughly easy on *my* account.’

I am, my lord, most truly,

Your lordship’s very

dutiful and affectionate son,

CLAYTON.

‘ P. S. MR. MERRICK, the best uncle in the world, has desired to accompany me ; how can I refuse his request ?’

‘ WELL, George, thou art something like a *lover*, I must confess ; and I wish thee success with all my heart. Miss Meredith will find thee every way worthy of her.’

SUCH was Lord Bromley’s soliloquy at the close of his son’s letter.

LORD CLAYTON having dispatched the foregoing epistle to his father to the post-house, made preparations in order to set off in pursuit of his Julia : and in less than hour actually departed from Chapman-Place, with his good uncle, like another Achates, by his side.

By travelling in the most expeditious manner he, at last, came up with the carriage which
Mr.

Mr. Meredith had hired for his journey : the sight of it made his heart leap for joy, and he was ready to fly out of the window next him, so impatient was he to behold the lovely creature whose various charms strongly imprinted on his mind, had so powerfully drawn him after her.

THE heart of a fond and faithful lover in such a situation must have been undoubtedly in a palpitating state, and as Lord Clayton was *such* a lover, it may be easily imagined by those who are not composed of the toughest materials, what his lordship felt when he quitted his own carriage and advanced towards that in which he expected to find Miss Meredith.

LET *those* imagine his surprize and sorrow when he beheld only Mr. and Mrs. Meredith with a maid-servant in the carriage, on his desiring the driver to stop the horses.

HE stood almost rooted to the ground staring at the amiable parents of his Julia, without being able to articulate a syllable.

THEY were not less surprized to see *him*, than he was to see *them* without their daughter ; and they were all for some time silent.

MR. MEREDITH was the first who spoke ‘ I little thought of seeing your lordship in this part of England.’

MR. MERRICK, not having been able to follow his nephew with equal velocity, did not make

make his appearance till his old friend was uttering those words, to which, observing his lordship's petrified aspect, he answered, 'Why, truly, Sir, you have some reason to wonder at our thus meeting together; but love will do wonderful things: my nephew's love for Miss Meredith would not let him rest when he heard of her departure from Chapman-Place, and my love for *him* would not suffer him to undertake his pursuit after her without *me*. You must know, my good friend, that we have brought agreeable news with us for the young lady, and such news as will not, we trust, be disagreeable either to yourself or to Mrs. Meredith—Your most obedient servant, Madam,' continued he; but hey day! I do not see Miss Meredith; what have you done with *her*, good folks?'

LORD CLAYTON was roused from his attitude of astonishment, as soon as his uncle opened his lips, and longed to make a particular enquiry after Miss Meredith himself; but he respectfully waited till his uncle ceased to speak: then he could not restrain the desire he had to be acquainted with the cause of Miss Meredith's absence.

A VIOLENT shower of rain falling just at that instant, Mr. Meredith intreated his lordship and Mr. Merrick to return to their carriage, telling them at the same time, that he would on their meeting together at the next town, within a quarter of a mile, gratify their curiosity concerning his daughter.

WHEN

WHEN they were all seated in a room in the best house in the town, Mr. Meredith delivered himself in the following manner.

‘ You, my lord, and you, my old friend, are, I plainly perceive, disappointed by not finding Julia with us—Your lordship looks somewhat alarmed about her: but you may be assured that if any mischief had happened to *her*, I should not appear so easy. The truth is, she is well, and in good hands: passing by the habitation of a sister of Mrs. Meredith’s, a Mrs. Norton, who buried a very worthless husband about a twelvemonth ago.—

‘ NORTON, Sir!’ said my Lord, ‘ excuse me for interrupting you—was he related to the gentleman whose widow your late brother married?’

‘ His first cousin once removed, my lord,’ replied Mr. Meredith: ‘ passing by Mrs. Norton’s habitation’ continued she ‘ near Leeds, she pressed us so much to leave her niece with her, whom she had not seen for some years, (never in England) that we could not resist her importunities; especially as she had always been a very generous aunt, and often assured Julia that she should be handsomely remembered in her will. Mr. Norton was a worthless man, because he behaved unkindly to his wife, in various shapes: but he was not a niggardly husband, and left her in affluent circumstances.’

HERE Mr. Meredith pausing, Lord Clayton replied, 'disappointed as I am, Sir, in not seeing Miss Meredith with you, I am pleased to hear that she is so agreeably situated, and beg your permission to make *her* a visit while you pursue your journey—I have news to communicate to her which will, I flatter myself, be welcome to her ears—Lord Bromley is now the *father* I wished him to be: his engagements with Mr. Jarvis are dissolved, and he has consented to give my hand to the lady who has long been in possession of my heart.'

MR. MERRICK having been whispering aside to Mrs. Meredith, while the above dialogue was carrying on, turned briskly about to Mr. Meredith, at the close of his lordship's last speech, and said, 'Ay, Sir, my nephew is quite free to make your daughter an offer of his hand without giving any uneasiness to the earl: I hope, therefore, that you and your *better half*—(bowing to Mrs. Meredith) will excuse us from going an inch further with you, as we are so powerfully prompted to take a different *route*.'

IN consequence of the replies which Mr. and Mrs. Meredith made to the above speech, Lord Clayton and his uncle took leave of them, after having promised, at their request, to remain at Leeds (within a few miles of which town Mrs. Norton lived) till their return, that they might all set off towards London together.

WHEN

WHEN Lord Clayton and Mr. Merrick promised to stay at Leeds till they were joined by their friends, they fully intended to have waited for them at that place ; but they were prevented from acting agreeably to their intentions.

JULIA, though she parted with no small reluctance from her indulgent parents, found herself so tenderly treated by her affectionate aunt, that she soon reconciled herself to her temporary separation from them ; the sooner, as her father had assured her, with his last adieu, that he would come back from Meredith-Castle when he had finished his business there.

MRS. NORTON took infinite pains to render her niece's residence with her as happy as possible, and studied to make the hours fly away unperceived : and that the home-scenes might not grow disgusting for want of variety, she called in all the amusements which the *environs* afforded to her assistance.

WHEN Julia, after having been only two days with her in the garden, a very smart young fellow, booted and in a genteel riding-dress, came down the steps, and advancing towards them, said to the latter, ' So, cousin, you are taking a mouthful of air this morning, to get a stomach to your dinner, I suppose.'

' AYE, cousin,' said Mrs. Norton, ' and if you will stay and dine with me, I shall be glad of your company.' —

' DINE

‘DINE with you!’ replied he,—‘harkee, cousin, I shan’t be satisfied with that: I shan’t: I am come to stay a bit with you, if you can put me into my old quarters.’

‘If you behave yourself well,’ said she, ‘I don’t know what I may do for you; but I declare positively, that if you have not left off your wild tricks, I shall desire you to decamp; for the last time you was here, your mad pranks were insufferable.’

‘OH! I am quite another creature now,’ said he, ‘but pray what pretty girl have you picked up since I was here?’ (throwing his eyes strongly on Julia, who was amusing herself at a little distance from them.)

‘SHE is something of a relation of yours,’ replied Mrs. Norton.—

‘NOT a very near one I hope,’ answered he abruptly.—

‘SHE is my niece Meredith, lately arrived from Ireland with her father.’—

‘O, ho! I smoke you now, and will soon introduce myself to her.—I am very glad Miss Meredith to find that we are—that we are—related—but not so related—as—as you understand me.’——He looked very silly, and could say no more.

MRS. NORTON seeing Julia extremely confused, on being so oddly and so abruptly addressed, and not in the least ready to answer her cousin, said to her with a smile : ‘ This gentleman, my dear, is the Mr. Norton of whom I was talking last night.’

JULIA, having by this time recovered herself, made so polite and proper a reply to Norton, that he was as much charmed with her *manner*, as he had been before she had opened her lips with her person, and felt himself deeply wounded by her various attractions.

FROM that day Norton grew more and more delighted with his cousin’s company, as he called her, and endeavoured to make himself as agreeable to her as possible ; but all he could say or do, however, was insufficient to inspire her with any passion but disgust.—Norton was a very pretty fellow, and took a great deal of pains to make his exterior parts striking ; but he had so shamefully neglected his mind, that Julia received far greater uneasiness from the insipidity of his conversation, considerably heightened by the lowness of his phraseology, than pleasure from his civilities ; by which, indeed, he became so troublesome to her, in a short time, that she earnestly wished for his departure.

MRS. NORTON, to whom Julia had opened her heart with regard to Lord Clayton, soon after her arrival, not imagining that *Charles*, who appeared in *her* eyes too much an admirer of the sex in general to feel any *penchant* for one particular

particular female, laughed at him a good deal whenever he made complaints to her of Miss Meredith's chilling behaviour to him: but when she found that he was actually in love with her, she talked very seriously to him about his *passion*, and advised him, as a friend, if he could not get the better of it, to withdraw himself from the object which had kindled it in his bosom, as his continuance near that object would only increase the disquiet he endured. 'If you have not courage enough, Charles,' added she, 'to conquer your passion for Miss Meredith, you must fly from her charms; for I can assure you that her heart is engaged, and that you will never be able to make any impression upon it.'

'NEVER!' replied he, looking at himself in a glass which fronted him, in a coxcombly manner.——

'No, never,' answered Mrs. Norton, 'If I am not greatly mistaken in her.'

BEING at that instant called out of the room, she left him seemingly highly satisfied in the survey of his own personal charms.

CHARLES's vanity not suffering him to be in the least rebuffed by his cousin's discovery and friendly admonitions, he was not only determined to stay where he was, but to try whether he could not bend Julia's stubborn breast in his favour.

IN this situation was Julia persecuted from morning to night by a man who was, in the
D 2 highest

highest degree, disagreeable to her, when Lord Clayton and Mr. Merrick came most seasonably to her relief.

JULIA, seeing *them* coming up the avenue one afternoon, flew to her aunt, and acquainted her with their approach, with animated expressions, which equally declared her pleasure and surprize. Teazed as she had been with the impertinence of Norton, she could not, at the unexpected appearance of Lord Clayton, silently enjoy the satisfaction it excited in her breast.

MRS. NORTON received his lordship with all the politeness due to his rank, and with all the marks of esteem to which he was, she thought, indebted, as she declared, and every way worthy lover of her niece.

WHEN the first compliments were exchanged, Mr. Merrick, in his jocular strain, took Mrs. Norton aside, in order to give his nephew an opportunity to have a private interview, knowing how much he wished for it, with his Julia.

LORD CLAYTON soon availed himself of his uncle's well-timed movement, and having respectfully embraced her, addressed her in the following terms:

‘ My dearest Julia, how have I longed for
‘ this happy moment, to tell you that I can
‘ now, with my father's entire approbation,
‘ make you mine for ever, and that the lawyers
‘ on both sides will be the only people to retard
‘ our union: Your amiable father will be here
‘ as

‘as soon as he has settled his business at Meredith-castle, with your excellent mother; and we have agreed to go from hence to London together, to put things in a prosperous train. — You look, my dear Julia, as if you wonder to hear me talk thus about your valuable parents.’

‘I DO indeed, my lord,’ said Julia, ‘because they knew nothing about this turn in your lordship’s affairs when they brought me from Chapman-place, or when they left me here.’

LORD CLAYTON then having given her information which removed all her astonishment, and increased her tender regard for him, she, with her usual sweetness and modesty, replied, ‘I have not deserved these repeated proofs of your lordship’s partiality for me; but I will endeavour to merit them, by never ceasing to consult *his* happiness who has *mine* so much at heart.’

BEFORE his lordship could get out an answer to that speech, his uncle entered the room with Mrs. Norton, and the conversation then became general.

CHARLES, having dined abroad that day, was, at his return, very much chagrined, on being told of the guests who arrived during his absence. So thoroughly disquieted, indeed, was he upon the occasion, that he could hardly behave with common civility to Lord Clayton and Mr. Merrick, when they paid their compliments to him, as related to the hospitable lady who had so politely received them. He sat in a sullen humour the whole evening, and looked at his

lordship frequently as if he wished to murder him with his eyes; and when he and his uncle retired to their lodgings at Leeds, he went to his apartment without taking leave either of Mrs. Norton or Miss Meredith, and early in the morning decamped.

WHEN Mrs. Norton came down to breakfast, she was not a little surprized to hear of her cousin's departure; but was not so sorry that he had taken himself away, as he had made himself so very disagreeable to her niece. Julia could not help discovering the satisfaction which she felt on the removal of her tormentor, in pretty strong expressions; because he had really occasioned a great deal of uneasiness to her, and because she was not altogether unapprehensive that Lord Clayton might, if he had staid and renewed his familiarities, have imagined he had met with some encouragement from her.

LORD CLAYTON too on his re-appearance was pleased though he kept in his joy, to hear of Norton's departure: for though he had no reason to doubt the sincerity of Julia's regard for him, he wished to have no rival in his way; and Norton, though he spoke but few words during the evening, strongly proved himself to be, by his envious glances and malignant looks, an alarmed lover.

LORD CLAYTON and Mr. Merrick spent the greatest part of every day at Mrs. Norton's, and their rooms at Leeds were almost literally sleeping ones. Julia every hour received new marks of his lordship's attachment to her; and as he studied, with an unwearied assiduity, to make

make her happy, she had nothing to wish for but the arrival of her amiable parents to render her completely so.

WHILE she was in this pleasing situation a sudden and unexpected event gave a cruel interruption to the felicity which she enjoyed with the higher relish, as she fondly flattered herself that she might depend upon the continuance of it.

NORTON, piqued at the coldness, not to say contempt with which Julia had treated him, and not chusing to have any *recontre* with Lord Clayton about her, as he loved his own dear person too well to endanger it for any girl, went off, determined to get her into his power by surprize. In consequence of such a determination, and of the promises which he received from a servant whom he had bribed to his interest, to acquaint him with all the motions in the family, he lodged himself at a farm-house not far off, and never sallied out but so disguised as to bid defiance to discovery.

HAVING waited several days very impatiently for an opportunity to carry his point, he was, at last, informed that Mrs. Norton and Miss Meredith, having heard that Lord Clayton was seized with an indisposition which would, in all probability, prevent him from going abroad for some time, were preparing to set out to make him a visit.

CHARLES immediately threw himself into the road to Leeds, and soon afterwards perceived the very people whom he wanted to see: he followed their carriage at a

proper distance, and when they were set down at Lord Clayton's lodgings, gained intelligence from the driver sufficient to induce him to believe that he should not find himself an unsuccessful schemist. By him he was told that they were to return in the evening, and by him, who was not proof against the arguments which he made use of to stagger his fidelity, he was assured of his assistance towards the execution of his designs. The plan of operations was concerted between them at the inn, and Charles thought the time extremely tedious, till his infamous coadjutor drove away to take up the ladies whom he had brought to town in the morning.

When the evening approached, Mrs. Norton felt herself desirous of being at home ; but his lordship, loth to part with his Julia, pressed her so earnestly to stay a little longer, as often as she rose to go home, and urged the advantage of a full moon so judiciously, that she was encouraged to remain with him much longer than she intended.

CHARLES having secured the driver, and taken care also to ply Mrs. Norton's footman, who was addicted to drinking, with liquor, saw the chaise set off from Lord Clayton's lodging with an exulting heart ; as the former had promised to follow his directions faithfully, and as the latter was too much muddled by the ale which he had swallowed, to make any opposition to the projected *manœuvres* of the night. Having also furnished himself with a horseman's coat, a mask, and a pair of pistols, he rode away to the spot on which he intended to exert his ingenuity in a new way.

He

HE waited not long for the chaise: riding up to the driver, he with a threatening voice ordered him to stop, swearing, at the same time, that he would blow his brains out, if he stirred an inch farther.

THE driver accordingly stopped. The ladies screamed. Mrs. Norton called out Thomas, Thomas, with great vehemence; but Thomas having been top-heavy, had lost his equilibrium, and was, at that instant, sprawling across the road, not in a condition either to move or speak.

CHARLES then dismounting bade the driver hold his horse, and advancing to the side on which Mrs. Norton sat, opened the door and said, 'Come, madam, let me beg the favour of you to quit your chaise for a few minutes.'

'Oh for God's sake, Sir,' replied she, 'do not use us ill: you shall have all the money we have about us.'

'Do not be afraid of my using you ill, madam,' said he, 'I scorn to use any lady so; but you *must* come out, because there is something belonging to you which I cannot so well get at while you are in the carriage.'

MRS. NORTON, finding herself too much in his power to think of making any resistance with probable success, quitted the carriage. He led her about a hundred yards from it, and then briskly left her to take possession of the seat

which she had vacated. When he had fastened the door, and whistled, the driver knowing what he had to do, whipped his horses, and turned them into a different road, regardless of the cries of Mrs. Norton, who ran as fast as she could begging him to stop, and promising to reward him richly; but her intreaties and her promises were equally in vain. She strained her voice till the carriage was out of sight, and then, unable to support herself any longer, fell down.

SUCH was Mrs. Norton's situation on being separated from her niece. To describe Julia's feelings in *hers* is impossible: she was sufficiently alarmed on the entrance of a supposed highwayman into the chaise; but how much more must she have been terrified, when her new companion, taking off his mask, discovered the very man who had given her such exquisite disquietude at her aunt's, and to whom she had shewn so strong an aversion!

SHE screamed again, louder than before, and immediately attempted to open the door next to her, in order to throw herself out of the chaise; but he soon prevented her from making so dangerous an effort to fly from him. Conscious of having greatly provoked his pride by her repeated refusals, she trembled to think to what lengths *that* pride might carry him; and could not help thinking that she had every thing to fear from a man who had taken such steps to get her intirely into his hands. In this state of mind, which may justly be called torturing, she wept and raved alternately by his side, without moving him in the least to pity her distress: he
only

only triumphed at the success of his stratagem, and told her that he would make her pay for the many disagreeable hours he had spent on her account.

JULIA, finding at length that her situation admitted of no relief, that opposition might only render her confinement less supportable, and that she could not possibly hope to regain her liberty by force, began to consider of the expediency of setting art against art; and while Norton was enjoying in the most insolent expressions, the *coup de main* of the evening, silently schemed in what manner to escape from her prison, and from the snares spread against her peace.

WHILE Julia was conveyed away by the above-mentioned dishonourable procedure from her afflicted aunt, *she* remained in a condition very much to be compassionated. For some time she lay on the spot on which she fell, without being able to raise herself from the ground; so fatigued was she by having exerted herself beyond her strength: and the violent agitation of her mind was a cruel addition to her other complaints.

At last, feeling herself able to rise, she got up in order to walk home: with a heavy heart she rose, and was alarmed at the thoughts of being above two miles from her own house later than she had ever been from it, and never in such distressful circumstances. The sky grew cloudy, the moon was darkened, and she was terrified. She walked on, however, but made a small progress. There was so faint a light, that she began to be afraid of mistaking her path.

Under

Under that discouraging apprehension she stood still, and could not help exclaiming, 'How unfortunately am I situated! and yet my poor Julia, Heaven knows that I feel for thee much more than for myself!'

THOMAS, having slept away the fumes of the ale which had flown into his head, was not a little surprized to find himself lying in the road in a dark evening—for when he mounted behind the chaise, it was a very bright one—and got up in a great hurry, with his imagination disturbed by the stories he had heard of ghosts and goblins. Being a superstitious fellow with a weak understanding, those stories had made such an impression upon him, that he was just then seized with a panic, and afraid to stir. Luckily, while he was filled with false terrors, a brisk wind blew away the clouds which had obscured the moon, and the full-orbed regent of the night shone forth in all her splendor. With that splendor, Thomas was instantaneously cheered; so comforted, indeed, that his fears were totally dispersed, and he went whistling homewards, as blythe as a bird, only stopping now and then to call the young 'squire a wicked one, for making him drink more than he could carry.

HEARING a female voice at a distance, he made up to the place from whence the sound, according to *his* ear, issued. On a nearer approach he started, as if he had trod upon an adder: 'It is my mistress! good gracious, how came she out here?'

WITH these few words, the honest effusions of his heart, he redoubled his pace, repeatedly, saying

saying as he advanced towards her, 'It is I,
'madam, it is Thomas; do not be afraid.'

It is not easy to determine whether Mrs. Norton or her honest servant was the most pleased at their unexpected meeting in so unexpected a place, at so unexpected an hour.

'OH! Thomas,' said she, 'I am glad you
'are come to my assistance.'

'AND so am I, madam, I am sure; but if I
'may be so *bold* as to *ask*, madam, how came
'you here?'

'I WILL tell you if I can, Thomas, as I go
'along, only keep close behind me.'

'THAT I will, madam—I would follow you
'to the world's end.'

MRS. NORTON arrived safe at her own house about midnight attended by her faithful Thomas: but so wearied by her walk, that she remained a good while in her easy chair before she could recover spirits enough to inform her maid what accident she had met with to occasion her coming home so late, why she came without her niece, and why she came on foot.

As soon as she rose the next morning, Mrs. Norton dispatched Thomas with a letter to Lord Clayton, to acquaint him with the very extraordinary adventure of the preceding evening.

LORD CLAYTON read Mrs. Norton's letter with the utmost consternation and concern,
'Good

‘ Good God !’ cried he, ‘ what is to be done ?’

MR. MERRICK having had his eye fixed on a news paper, while his nephew was reading his letter, threw it down upon the table when he heard that exclamation, and said, ‘ What is the matter, my lord ?’

‘ MATTER, my dear Sir !—I want breath to tell you—my Julia, my life, my all, is—

‘ Not dead, I hope.’

‘ WORSE, perhaps, for she may by this time be—ruined for ever.’

HE then, giving the letter to his uncle, walked up and down the room violently agitated, and much more like a distracted man than a rational being.

MR. MERRICK having perused it, said, ‘ This is a very ugly affair and a very odd one, indeed, my lord, I never heard of a highwayman acting in such a manner: and to tell you the truth, I am of opinion that somebody has disguised himself in order to carry off your mistress,’

LORD CLAYTON started at that speech, and cried out, ‘ You have hit upon it, Sir ; I believe the highwayman was only assumed to conceal the rival.’

NEITHER of them, however, in the least suspected Norton to have been the man who had appeared

appeared in that character, and separated Julia from her aunt.

‘ I will go immediately to Mrs. Norton,’ said Mr. Merrick: ‘ perhaps, by laying our heads together, we may make some useful discoveries.’

‘ I WILL wait on you, Sir,’ replied his lordship.

‘ By no means, my lord,—by striking your *rash* in you may endanger your life.’

‘ WHAT is life without my Julia? No, no, Sir, I *must*, I *will* accompany you—pray do not oppose me—pray do not attempt to detain me.’

MR. MERRICK finding himself utterly unable to persuade his nephew to remain in his lodgings on account of his health, ceased to make an opposition to his wishes, but could not help entreating him with all the pressing importunity of a kind relation to wrap himself up well before he set out.

WHEN they had left their apartments about a couple of hours, Mr. and Mrs. Meredith, stopping at Leeds in their way to Mrs. Norton’s, to enquire at what quarter of the town Lord Clayton lodged, were to their great surprize acquainted with the extraordinary transactions of the preceding evening, between *that* place and Mrs. Norton’s house, and being also informed that his lordship and Mr. Merrick had both been

been gone to the latter, followed them immediately.

THEY found the whole family, except the maid whom Charles had bribed, truly unhappy: she however affected a concern upon the occasion, and seemed to sympathise deeply with those who had most reason to lament the loss which they had sustained.

ON a general consultation it was believed that Norton was the man who had by so uncommon a device drawn Julia into his power: but they were all extremely embarrassed with regard to the means proper to be used for the recovery of her.

WHILE they were deliberating how to act in such perplexing circumstances, they were most agreeably astonished to see Miss Meredith riding towards them in a post-chaise. Mr. Meredith who first perceived her was particularly so to behold her attended by the very servant who had left her in the melancholy situation from which Lord Clayton had relieved her. He was doubly astonished; but the joy of the *father* rising superior to the resentment of the *master*, he went forth to receive *her* with paternal delight, without feeling himself disposed to load *him* with reproaches for his past ungrateful behaviour; concluding, not unjustly, from the satisfaction visible in his daughter's countenance, that John had done something to merit a pardon for his former base and barbarous carriage to her.

MRS. MEREDITH followed her husband with tears of transport, attended by Mrs. Norton,
Lord

LORD CLAYTON, and Mr. Merrick, whose different sensations, though all of the joyous kind, cannot easily be imagined.

WHEN the first congratulations on Julia's return were over, John threw himself at Mr. Meredith's feet, and in the humblest terms begged his forgiveness for what he had formerly done to deserve a very severe chastisement from him: 'When you have heard what Miss Meredith has to say about me, Sir,' continued he, 'I dare believe that you will not think me altogether unworthy of it.'

MR. MEREDITH turning to his daughter, as if he wished to have an answer from *her* before he made a reply to that speech, she said with a most winning benignity of aspect, 'You may forgive John, Sir, for he has been of infinite service to me.'

HE then bid John rise, and promised not only to forgive him for his *ill*, but to reward him for his *good* behaviour.

WHEN Julia had received some refreshment she was desired by her amiable parents to acquaint them in what providential manner, by what unlooked-for means she had been restored to them. After a few dutiful and affectionate expressions she gratified their curiosity in the following words, to which Lord Clayton listened with particular attention.

'My dear aunt has undoubtedly mentioned her being taken out of the chaise in which we were returning from Leeds by a person appearing

‘ peering like a highwayman, who, having
‘ seated himself in her place, carried me away
‘ from her: but she little imagines, perhaps,
‘ that the supposed highwayman is related to
‘ her.’

WE all guess that Mr. Norton is the man,
said Mr. Meredith, ‘ but go on, my dear.’—

‘ MR. NORTON is indeed the person,’ continued Julia. ‘ who assumed such an appearance,
‘ and had recourse to such an expedient to make
‘ me subservient to his wishes. Let me do him
‘ the justice however to say, that he discovered
‘ no dishonourable designs. When he pulled off
‘ his mask, I was more terrified than I had
‘ been at his first approach, and filled with
‘ more alarming apprehensions. I attempted
‘ to deliver myself from his hands, though at
‘ the hazard of my life, as the chaise was
‘ swiftly moving; but he soon made me feel
‘ too sensibly that I could not escape from him.
‘ I was compelled, therefore, to hear all his insulting language; for insulting it was to the
‘ highest degree, as he raillied me in the most
‘ provoking terms for the distress which he saw
‘ strongly painted in every feature of my face,
‘ laughed at my tears and bewailings, and with
‘ the vainest expressions complimented himself
‘ on his cruel ingenuity.

‘ WHITHER he intended to carry me I knew
‘ not: but when we had travelled some hours at
‘ a great rate, without meeting a single creature, I began to think that it would be more
‘ prudent to seem reconciled to my situation,
‘ and to assume a character in my turn, in order
‘ der

der to facilitate the recovery of my liberty. Drying up my tears, I told Mr. Norton that he had taken very unnecessary pains to get a woman into his power who could not make him the expected amends for it, as her heart was not in her own possession. As I spoke those words without appearing to resent his having *surprized* me into his hands, he assured me that though he should think himself very happy in the possession of my heart, he would be satisfied with the surrender of my person to him, as he flattered himself that time and his perpetual endeavours to please me would produce an alteration in my sentiments in his favour.

As I did not in the least expect such a speech from him after the raillery which he had vented against me, and indeed the insolence of his whole behaviour, I was, I own, softened by it, and conceived a better opinion of him than I had before: but I was not so far affected by that speech, as not to form little schemes, while we whirled along, to disengage myself from my captivity, by calling in art to my aid.

I therefore told him that he paid too much regard to my person; and that I hoped he would be contented to wait till the alteration wished for in my sentiments was brought about by time.

In this manner we conversed till soon after day-break; then seeing a gentleman galloping towards us with a servant at a considerable distance behind him, I could not help making an effort to interest him in my behalf. I de-
fired

‘ fired Mr. Norton to stop the chaise, to put
‘ his head out at *his* window, as the gentleman
‘ was on that side of the chaise, and to intreat
‘ him to come to my window, as I wished to
‘ speak a word to him. Mr. Norton concluded
‘ that I knew the gentleman, and not imagin-
‘ ing, I believe, after what had passed between
‘ us during the last hour, that I had any desire
‘ to leave him, complied with my request im-
‘ mediately. While he was so employed, I
‘ took my pocket-book and pencil, and hurry-
‘ ing down a few lines on a piece of paper,
‘ had them ready concealed in my hand to
‘ deliver to the stranger, by that time he
‘ came up to me. Addressing myself to him
‘ as if I was intimately acquainted with him, I
‘ begged the favour of him to read my note,
‘ stretching out my hand. He took it with a
‘ very polite air, but proved not to be a man of
‘ spirit as well as politeness; for he only bowed
‘ his head and rode on.

‘ By this time the gentleman’s servant came
‘ up: I was not a little surprized to see the
‘ person by whom I had been formerly so ill
‘ used; but the distress of the moment extin-
‘ guished my resentment, and I implored his
‘ assistance. Deliver me from my prison, John,
‘ said I, and you shall be well rewarded.

‘ JOHN, being no stranger to my prejudices
‘ in Lord Clayton’s favour, seeing me in the
‘ hands of a man very unlike his lordship, and
‘ struck, I suppose, with remorse for what he
‘ had done, when in your service, Sir, (turn-
‘ ing to her father) immediately asked Mr.
‘ Norton

‘ Norton what he meant by forcing away a
‘ lady from her relations.

‘ MR. NORTON being unprepared for such
‘ an address to him from a footman, seemed to
‘ be very much disconcerted, and having forgot
‘ to take his pistols out of the holsters when he
‘ dismounted in order to execute his designs
‘ against me by separating me from my aunt,
‘ found himself not in a condition to appear in
‘ a formidable light.

‘ HOWEVER, his pride was roused; he
‘ jumped out of the chaise and ran towards his
‘ horse, which the driver had fastened behind
‘ it: but John dismounting with great agility,
‘ seized him before he could arm himself: they
‘ struggled a good while, but John had at last
‘ so much advantage, that Mr. Norton thought
‘ proper to beg for quarters, and to promise his
‘ adversary that he would not interrupt him,
‘ while he took me under his protection. But
‘ Mr. Norton, as soon as he rose from the
‘ ground, making an attempt to snatch one of
‘ his pistols, notwithstanding his promise, John
‘ was so provoked at his cowardly behaviour,
‘ that he fired the two pistols belonging to him
‘ into the air, and bid him ride away as fast as
‘ he could, and think himself very well off at
‘ not being more severely handled. Norton,
‘ taking him at his word, threw himself into his
‘ saddle, and soon disappeared. John then
‘ came to me, and after having, in a suppliant
‘ posture, intreated me to forgive him for his
‘ cruel treatment of me, of which he said he
‘ had most sincerely repented, told me that he
‘ was

‘ was ready to wait on me to whatever place I chose to go ; and as I had, during his contest with Mr. Norton, gained the driver over to me by a handsome present, I found them both very willing to conduct me hither.’

HERE Miss Meredith ended the account of her happy escape from Mr. Norton, and all her hearers received great pleasure from it. Mr. Meredith closed the congratulations repeated upon the occasion with saying, that he would go and talk with John a little. ‘ Perhaps he may lose his place for having left his master so many hours, though he has been so laudably engaged. Should he be discharged at his return, I shall look on myself as obliged to take him again into my service.’

WITH these humane and just sentiments he quitted the room : *humane* every body will, surely, pronounce them to have been, and nobody, I imagine, will deem them to have been *unjust*, who has a liberal way of thinking. If the commission of a good action is not to atone for the perpetration of a bad one, what encouragement has vice to come over to the side of virtue?

MRS. MEREDITH, though not a woman of narrow notions, declared herself to be of the opinion that her husband would act too hastily by taking John into his service again ; allowing him, at the same time, all proper praise for the deliverance of her daughter from such an alarming situation.

WHAT

WHAT struck Mrs. Norton most in her niece's narrative was, her having courage to trust herself with a man who had actually behaved scandalously to her : whereas her cousin had only filled her with terrifying apprehensions.

LORD CLAYTON could not help seconding Mrs. Norton, and expressing his admiration at the confidence his Julia reposed in John.

JULIA endeavoured to defend her conduct upon the common in the following manner :

‘ THE gentleman whom I accosted on his coming up to me, as if we had been very well acquainted with each other, behaved, indeed, politely to me, but with that sort of politeness as if he had never seen me before ; and when he had read my note, looked at me, while he rode off, as if he thought he should gain no honour, but run himself into much danger, by concerning himself about me. After such a carriage, therefore, on *his* part, I had no reason to expect a great deal of indulgence on Mr. Norton's : for from the hurry with which I delivered my note, and from my confusion, which was certainly observed, he could not but suppose that I had tried to interest the gentleman in my behalf, and to induce him to procure my releasment. I felt myself so distressed at the failure of my stratagem, that the appearance of John, which, at another time must have made my blood rise with indignation, occasioned a very different emotion in me. I beheld him not as *the man* by whom I had been so cruelly used, but as a
‘ *man*

‘ *man* who might, possibly, be of service to me.
‘ I was pretty sure of not being better treated
‘ by Mr. Norton, after having made an attempt
‘ to disengage myself from him ; and I should,
‘ I thought, run no risque by returning home
‘ with John, if he succeeded according to my
‘ wishes, and would accompany the chaise, when
‘ he had obliged Mr. Norton to remount his
‘ horse, and give me no farther molestation.
‘ The driver I also imagined would readily bring
‘ me hither, when I had made it worth his
‘ while to follow *my* directions.’

WHILE Julia was making the above-mentioned apology for her conduct in a very critical situation, Mr. Meredith was giving an attentive ear to the self-reproaches of an apparently sincere penitent, intermixed with his honest confessions.

‘ If you knew, Sir,’ said John, ‘ how much
‘ I suffered since the day I set out with you
‘ from Chester, you would, I do believe, have
‘ some compassion for me, as you was always
‘ the best natured gentleman alive. Oh, Sir !
‘ I don’t wish my greatest enemy to feel what
‘ I have felt since. I have had no peace in
‘ my mind from the day when I behaved so
‘ badly to Miss Meredith, and the sight of her
‘ this morning made my heart sink within me.
‘ I was ashamed to see her, and was going to
‘ turn my horse another way ; but hearing her
‘ call on me to deliver her from the person in
‘ the chaise with her, I immediately thought
‘ that she had fallen into bad hands, and was
‘ determined to lend her all the assistance in my
‘ power.’

‘power. Providence blessed my endeavours, and I shall be happy if you think that what I have done in her behalf, will make some amends for my former ill behaviour to her, of which, heaven knows, I sincerely repent.’

‘I BELIEVE you to be sincere, John,’ said Mr. Meredith, ‘you have acted like a sincere penitent; you have deserved forgiveness, and I hope you will not lose your place by having left your master, in order to be serviceable to my daughter.’

‘My master, Sir, is not an ill-tempered gentleman; I do hope, therefore, that when I have told him the truth of the affair, he will rather commend me than turn me away, though he did not care to assist Miss Meredith himself. My master is a very good sort of man, Sir; but he never chuses to meddle with any business which he thinks will bring his person into danger.’

‘WELL, John, if your master should not be satisfied with the excuse you make for absence, return to me, with an assurance that I will not suffer you to be a loser for having brought my daughter to this house.’

MR. MEREDITH then went back to the parlour, and communicated what had passed between him and John; and they all approved of his carriage to his late servant, especially of his not having induced him to believe that he should be again received into the family as a domestic: that he ought to be rewarded they were all

willing to allow, but looked upon his being restored to his place, as an unnecessary consideration for his services.

LORD CLAYTON and Mr. Merrick, having spent a very chearful evening with their agreeable friends, returned to their lodgings. Before the next morning, his lordship was convinced of the error which he had committed, with regard to his health, by not following his uncle's advice: for he had caught cold, as the night was a damp one, and struck his rash in; so that he was obliged to keep his bed for a few days: during which time Mr. Merrick, though he often gently chid him for being refractory, was extremely assiduous about him, and administered, with his own hands, the medicines which were thought proper for him.

As soon as he was recovered, Mr. Meredith acquainted him with his intentions to set off for London, having only waited for his lordship's being able to travel. Lord Clayton being quite ready to accompany him, Mrs. Norton was in a short time deserted by the amiable groupe from whose company she received so much satisfaction.

THE day before that fixed for their departure, while Lord Clayton and his uncle were superintending the package of their things, they were surprized by a visit from a gentleman whom they little expected to see again.

THIS gentleman was Mr. Benson, 'You seem surprized, my lord, and you my good Sir,' turning to Mr. Merrick, 'to see me here; but

‘but I could not possibly go through this town, after having accidentally heard that you were both lodged here, without paying my compliments to you.’

‘I AM exceedingly glad to see you, Sir,’ said Lord Clayton; ‘and I will venture to say, that my uncle is as much pleased as myself at your unexpected, but not therefore less welcome, appearance.’

‘YOUR lordship has ventured to say nothing but the truth,’ said Mr. Merrick; ‘Yes, Sir,’ continued he, ‘I am truly glad to light upon you again, and hope that you have met with no disappointments since we parted.’

‘No, Sir, thank heaven! in whom I always firmly trusted, I am as happy a man as any in England; and to speak a bold word, thoroughly *contented*.’

‘FEW people can, indeed, speak that word, Sir,’ replied my lord, ‘and feel the true meaning of it; and I shall be rejoiced to know in what manner you have arrived to such felicity.’

‘I WILL relate the sequel of my story, my lord, with a great deal of pleasure.’

‘You have recovered your estate, I suppose, Sir,’ said Mr. Merrick in his lively way.

‘You shall hear, Sir.—When I left Chester, I went directly to the honest fellow
E 2, from

‘ from whom I had received so many kindnesses,
‘ and whom I wished to reward more than I
‘ had yet done for his uncommon fidelity and
‘ friendship. On my arrival at his cottage,
‘ the worthy creature received me with such ex-
‘ travagant emotions of joy, that I could not
‘ help looking at him with *some* astonishment.
‘ Oh! Sir, said he, I never was so delighted to
‘ see you in my life, and ran away from me,
‘ but returned in a short time with a box in his
‘ arms.’ ‘ Here they are, Sir,’ continued he,
‘ and I pray to God that you may live long to
‘ be happy with your good fortune.’

‘ WHAT good fortune?’ replied I, not know-
ing what to make of his preamble.

‘ This box, Sir,’ said he, ‘ contains all the
‘ writings belonging to your estate.’

‘ How! are you in earnest, William?’

‘ INDEED it does, Sir, and I heartily give
‘ you joy on your coming to take possession of
‘ the estate which has been kept from you for
‘ so many years.’

‘ You amaze me!—How came you by the
‘ writings?’

‘ THE major gave them to me, Sir.’

‘ MORE wonderful still!—the major! ma-
‘ jor Dixon!’

‘ YES, Sir, he himself, I do assure you.
‘ He sent for me, when he was upon his death-
‘ bed,

‘ bed, and put them into my hands, desiring me, at the same time, to inform you that the thoughts of having so long deprived you of your estate made him miserable beyond expression; and he told nothing but the truth, indeed, I believe, for I never saw a poor gentleman in so terrible a way. He died the next morning, raving in such a manner, that I was almost afraid to stay in the room.—I shall never forget how he struggled for breath to say something to me a little before he died: I hope I shall not see so shocking a sight again. But I’ll try to forget him, Sir,’ continued he, opening the box.

‘ I WAS so much affected with the account of the major’s appearance in his last moments, ill as I had been used by him, that I stood for some time looking at the box, lost in thought—William, at length, roused me from my reflections, by presenting my writings to me, which I received from him with an effusion of gratitude, warm from the heart to that Being at whose decrees, in the midst of my heaviest disappointments, I never murmured, and on whose justice I had ever a strong reliance, for having rewarded my patience by the completion of my wishes.’

HERE Mr. Benson closed his story, and received the sincerest congratulations from Lord Clayton and Mr. Merrick on the recovery of his estate. When he had wished them both all the health and happiness they themselves could desire, he took leave of them; but not without being heartily invited to Bromley-house, when- ever he made a visit to London.

LORD BROMLEY having been acquainted by his son with the various situations into which he had been thrown, during his absence, and with the day fixed for his return to London, immediately formed a scheme to surprize *him*, his uncle, and his friends upon the road. In consequence of this design, his lordship, as soon as he had read Lord Clayton's *long* letter, ordered his post chaise and four to be got ready.

STILTON was the town at which his lordship intended to wait for the party from Yorkshire, in case of his not meeting them before he reached it.

JUST as he entered that town, he saw Mr. Merrick advancing in a post-chaise by himself.

'So, ho, my dear Merrick', said his lordship, 'I am come up to you at last.'

'HAH, my lord,' replied he, starting, being not in the least aware of beholding his lordship in that place, 'who would have thought of seeing *you* here?'

'I APPEAR, unexpectedly, I believe, but so much the better— what have you done with your nephew, for you seem to ride *solus*.'

'QUITE so, my lord: your son is not far off, with the Meredith-family in a post-coach.'

'THAT

‘THAT is well, that is well; how far do you think they are from hence?’

‘THEY will soon be here, I dare say.’

HARDLY were those words out of his mouth, when the wished-for coach made its appearance.

LORD BROMLEY and Mr. Merrick having both agreed to put up at the inn nearest to the spot on which they met, quitted their carriages, and waited at the door of the house till the coach drove up to them.

WHEN Lord Clayton beheld his father and uncle talking together on foot, he could not suppress the astonishment which that sight occasioned. Turning to Mr. Meredith, ‘there is ‘Lord Bromley, Sir,’ said he, ‘standing with ‘Mr. Merrick. I never was more surprized!’

THE coach, at that instant, stopped. Lord Bromley approaching it, said to Mr. Meredith, ‘I have not the pleasure of being known personally to you, Sir; yet I flatter myself that I am ‘not a total stranger to you, as I imagine that ‘my son has informed you who I am: I therefore ‘beg leave to welcome you to Stilton, and you ‘Madam, and you, Miss Meredith, bowing to ‘them alternately—and I am not sorry to see ‘you, George, especially in such good company—but come we will not waste the time ‘in ceremony—open the door, my lad.’

WHEN that command was obeyed, his lordship handed Mrs. Meredith out of the coach: Lord Clayton followed with Miss Meredith, and Mr. Meredith closed the rear alone: but was soon joined by Mr. Merrick, and the two old friends embraced each other with the utmost cordiality.

WHILE the ladies retired to take a walk in the garden, Mr. Merrick whispered his nephew, and they immediately left the room: 'let your father and Meredith,' said he, as they were going across the yard to look at a smart carriage which stood there, 'have a little chat by themselves, you will not be a jot less happy for their interview, I will answer for it.'

WHEN Lord Bromley found himself with Mr. Meredith in private, he began in the following manner.

'It gives me a great deal of pleasure, Sir, to think that we are in a fair way to be better acquainted? and that pleasure is considerably increased, when I reflect on the happy choice my son has made of a partner for life—your amiable daughter.'

'She is a good girl, my lord, thank Heaven.'

'I have no doubts concerning her goodness, Sir: and I shall speak of her in no higher terms than what she is justly entitled to, by saying that she is the most agreeable young lady I ever beheld; and that she seems to be
'thoroughly

‘thoroughly qualified to make a desirable wife to a man of so domestic a turn as my George is: every thing that both my son and Mr. Merrick have told me in her praise is legible in her countenance; and I dare swear that Lord Clayton will have reason, every hour after his union with Miss Meredith, to remember *the* hour with peculiar satisfaction in which he first became acquainted with her.’

‘You do my daughter, you do *me*, you do all my family, my lord, too much honour.’

‘Not at all, Sir: I shall think myself, I do assure you, honoured by the alliance: therefore, pray do not mention a syllable more upon that head. Let us rather talk to the point—what fortune do you propose to lay down with your daughter?’

‘TEN thousand pounds, my lord.’

‘MANY of my brother-peers,’ said his lordship, smiling, ‘would like to be dishonoured in that manner—But to be serious—George shall be enabled to treble that sum for *her* advantage, and nothing shall be wanting on *my* side, to make them live agreeably to their wishes in every respect. I have occasioned many vexatious moments to my son, by opposing my wrong ideas of conjugal felicity to his right ones; and as I am thoroughly convinced of the justness of *his* notions with regard to *that* felicity, it is high time for me to prove the sincerity of my conviction by the propriety of my actions; and, so Sir, with

‘ your leave, I will go in search of Lord Clayton,
‘ and tell him the result of our *Tete-a-Tete*.’

WITHOUT waiting for a verbal answer from Mr. Meredith, because he saw a very significant one in his face, he left the room.

SOON after his lordship’s departure, Mr. Merrick entered the room.

‘ HEY-DAY, my friend ; what alone, and
‘ in a brown study ? I took Lord Clayton aside,
‘ that you and the old earl might lay your
‘ heads together without any restraint or inter-
‘ ruption : where is his lordship ? you have
‘ settled matters I hope to your mind ?’

‘ Very much so, Sir,’ replied Mr. Meredith :
‘ his lordship has behaved generously ; far be-
‘ yond my expectations.’

‘ I AM glad to hear you give so good an ac-
‘ count of him ; generosity was never reckoned
‘ among his virtues : but I have taken no small
‘ pains lately to inspire him with a liberal way
‘ of thinking, equal to the largeness of his pos-
‘ sessions—Well, what has he done ?’

MR. MEREDITH then related the conversa-
tion which had passed between them.

‘ Upon my word, his lordship has exceeded
‘ my expectations too—But truly, considering
‘ the lady and her fortune together’—

AT that moment Lord Clayton entered the
room, leading in Julia.

‘My father, Sir, has made me the happiest of men,’ said his lordship, addressing himself to Mr. Meredith, ‘by informing me of the satisfaction which you discovered at his behaviour on my account.’

‘I SHOULD be, indeed, my lord, unworthy of such a son-in-law, and my daughter would not deserve such a husband as your lordship, were we not both extremely well-satisfied with the earl’s generous proceedings, and with your unexceptionable carriage.’

JULIA smiled alternately on her father, and on his lordship, and Mr. Merrick, with his usual vivacity, removed all the little delicate awkwardnesses naturally rising on such an occasion among many people of refined sentiments, by saying, ‘I protest now, you three make the most agreeable trio I ever saw in my life, and if I was a painter, hang me if I would not clap you upon canvas.’

THIS speech of Mr. Merrick’s was uttered in so particular a manner, and accompanied with so many arch looks that it occasioned a laugh. Before any part of the trio returned an answer to it, Mr. Meredith entered the room, followed by Lord Bromley.

‘So—so—good people,’ said his lordship, ‘I am glad to hear you so merry, and shall be more to hear the cause of your mirth.’

‘One of my odd speeches, my lord, that is all,’ replied Mr. Merrick: ‘there’s no repeating it.’

‘ it, it will be good for nothing at second hand :
‘ it will be like a bottle of bad wine, consisting of
‘ *bottoms* left the preceding day, and barbarously
‘ jumbled together by a rogue of a butler.’

THE subsequent conversation was entirely of the chearful kind; but as few if any of my readers would, I believe, feel themselves interested in it, I am not willing to tire their patience by committing it to paper.

DURING the above-mentioned scenes and transactions in Yorkshire, Miss Jarvis and Mr. Harrison, after having met with a small interruption to the happiness which they mutually enjoyed on being re-permitted to see each other on the wished-for footing, were united with the most prosperous omens; for, according to all human probability, they had, from their naturally domestic dispositions, the greatest reason in the world to expect felicity in the marriage state—But I must not forget the interruption they met with previous to their union.

THERE are some people of so strange a turn, of a temper so unaccountably perverse, that they cannot bear to see any of their fellow-creatures happy: whoever appear contented with themselves or their affairs, are objects sufficiently enviable, and are sure of provoking the spleen, and irritate the ill-nature of such people; and the more deserving they are, the more is that ill-nature irritated, and that spleen provoked. What dreadful relations do some people make! friends, they cannot possibly be: they are utterly incapable of friendship, and even for common acquaintance they are dangerous.

How

How often is the peace of a whole family destroyed by the execrable ingenuity of one religious being either related to it or acquainted with it: nay sometimes the *malevolent* infernally please themselves with having thrown families into confusion only known to them by name—Can they be too sharply satirized?

SUCH a being was a Miss Mowbray, almost old enough to be a Mrs. who living very near Raven's-Nest, waited on Mrs. Jarvis soon after her arrival there, and by a flattering exterior, added to much politeness in her manners, for she was a woman of birth, and had genteel connections, rendered herself so agreeable to Mrs. Jarvis, that she returned her visit in a short time, and told her, at taking leave, that she hoped they should be good neighbours.

MISS MOWBRAY lived with an aunt who never appeared abroad, for she was bed-ridden. Having been formerly, in her opinion, ill used by young Harrison, with whom she was desperately in love, the prospect of his being married to Miss Jarvis, after the match had been long broken off, gave her inexpressible disquietude: she thought she had been ill used by him, but she thought very unjustly: the truth is, he was not mean enough to encourage the indiscreet advances of a lady for whom he felt no prepossessions. Hence arose her resentment, and that passion co-operating with a fertile brain, occasioned no small vexation to the amiable couple, who began to look upon themselves as out of the reach of disappointment.

BEING intimately acquainted with Miss Clinton, she went to her one morning, and desiring to be closetted with her, unbosomed herself in the following terms;

‘MY dear Clinton, I am come to beg a prodigious favour of you.’

‘OUT with it then, my dear Mowbray, without any farther introduction.’

‘MR. HARRISON is, you know, on the point of being married to little Jarvis.’

‘TRUE, they only wait for those dilatory gentlemen the lawyers—what then?’

‘WHY then, I should be glad to prevent their coming together. I shall be glad to tear Jarvis’s eyes out, if she is happy with Harrison, and happy she will certainly be, to my sorrow, if married to him, for he will make her an excellent husband.’

‘How, Matilda! should you be sorry to see two deserving people formed for each other’s felicity, happily united?’

‘THE sight of any people happily united, is extremely painful to me; but the sight of them so united would be insupportable.—If you had been treated by a pretty fellow as Harrison has treated me, you would not wonder at my thus resenting his desertion from me, especially to take up with such a chit as Jarvis. I can’t conceive how he came to find
any

‘any charms in that baby face of hers, for
‘there is just as much meaning in any of
‘the paste-board ones in a millener’s shop—
‘But I ramble from the point—I want to se-
‘parate the doves, if possible, for ever.’

‘You will not find that so easy a matter.’

‘I HAVE schemed their separation; but your
‘assistance will be necessary towards the exe-
‘cution of my design.’

‘WHAT is it?’

‘THEY are both to drink tea with me this
‘afternoon. When we have chatted for some
‘time, I will take Harriot with me into a dis-
‘tant room, and as a friend, for there is no-
‘thing like the mask of friendship when any
‘mischief of this kind is to be done, advise
‘her to put a stop to all proceedings between
‘her and her lover; telling her, that he has
‘proved himself totally unworthy of her, as
‘his whole aim by marrying her, is to supply a
‘poor girl whom he privately married while he
‘was a student at Cambridge, with money, in
‘order to hinder her from claiming him as her
‘husband. To strengthen my advice I have
‘drawn up a letter in his name, which will,
‘I believe, not a little stagger her. Now,
‘Clinton, while I am so employed with her,
‘you must go to work with him; and contrive
‘some plausible story to set him against her:
‘but that story I leave to you, for I am sure
‘that you can, if you please, be very service-
‘able to me by your invention, on this occasi-
‘on. When the doves meet afterwards, they
‘will

‘ will feel rather awkwardly, I imagine, look
 ‘ at each other with embarrassed countenances,
 ‘ and be in a strange agitation concerning
 ‘ what they have heard. When we have gone
 ‘ so far, we must prevent them from coming to
 ‘ any explanation, if they should be inclined to
 ‘ make attempts towards an *eclaircissement*, by
 ‘ not suffering them to go home together.
 ‘ Here your brother may step in to our assist-
 ‘ ance.’

‘ Not to-day, my dear, for he went to town
 ‘ this morning, in consequence of a letter which
 ‘ he received to inform him of Miss Strutton’s
 ‘ illness.’

‘ WELL, then, on second thoughts, we may
 ‘ do without him, I believe, and venture to let
 ‘ them return as they came, for in all probabi-
 ‘ lity our joint endeavours to disturb the har-
 ‘ mony between them may produce a violent
 ‘ quarrel; if we are disappointed we must have
 ‘ recourse to new plots, for I shall have no rest
 ‘ till I have broken all their measures—Should
 ‘ all my schemes prove unsuccessful, and should
 ‘ they be, in spite of my efforts to divide them,
 ‘ connected together by the closest ties, I shall
 ‘ —I don’t know what I shall do—leave the
 ‘ kingdom, perhaps; for while I remain in it I
 ‘ may have a chance to see their happy faces
 ‘ somewhere.’

WITH these words Miss Mowbray wished
 her friend a good morning, repeatedly desiring
 her neither to disappoint her, nor to forget
 the game she had to play, and went home
 very

very well satisfied with her visit, as Miss Clinton had assured her that she would wait on her in the afternoon, if her aunt was tolerable.

WHEN Matilda was gone, Miss Clinton, being of a different disposition, went directly to her aunt, and told her how much she had been shocked at Miss Mowbray's having discovered such a bad heart. 'I always thought, indeed, Madam, that she was of a discontented and satirical turn, but I never imagined she would take so much pains to gratify her ill-nature.'

SHE then acquainted her aunt with the schemes which Miss Mowbray had been communicating to set Mr. Harrison and Miss Jarvis at variance.

MRS. COLLIER lifted up her hands and eyes——'I really did not think that Miss Mowbray would have turned out such a disgrace to her sex——I am sorry you have any acquaintance with her: such people are very dangerous companions: the friendship which they profess can never be sincere. If you was in Miss Jarvis's situation just at this time, she would, I dare say, take as much pains to destroy your happiness. You do not intend, I hope, my dear, to forward her iniquitous designs?'

'No, madam, I fully intend to defeat them: but, with your leave, I will comply with her invitation this afternoon, that she may not, from my staying away, suspect my intentions.'

MISS CLINTON, however, soon afterwards was obliged to send a message to Miss Mowbray to put off her engagement for the afternoon, her aunt having fallen down a long flight of stairs, and received some very dangerous wounds on her head, to all appearance.

MRS. COLLIER'S melancholy situation engrossed her niece's attention, and made her very unhappy, though the surgeon, when he dressed the wounds, assured her that they were not so dangerous as they had appeared to be at first sight. And indeed she was in so fair a way to recover in a few days, that Miss Clinton began to think of putting Miss Jarvis on her guard against Matilda.

SHE accordingly wrote a letter to Miss Jarvis to inform her of the schemes which Miss Mowbray had formed against her peace, that both she and Mr. Harrison might be prepared for any of her attempts to alienate their affections from each other.

WITH such laudable intentions Miss Clinton dispatched her letter, but it arrived too late to answer the end for which it was written: tho' the motives of the writer rendered it very acceptable.

MISS MOWBRAY, being deprived of Miss Clinton's company by Mrs. Collier's accident, engaged another female friend in the neighbourhood to supply her place, who luckily being of a similar disposition, entered with great spirit into the business proposed to her: so that
by

by their combined efforts, Miss Jarvis and Mr. Harrison returned from their visit not with that mutual satisfaction which they before enjoyed.

WHILE they were riding home with Mrs. Jarvis who called for them after having made her visits, they exchanged not a syllable, and she could extort from them very few words.

‘ You have had a very stupid visit sure, my dear—’ said she to Harriot—

‘ I wish I was at home, madam,’ was her answer.

‘ You seem to be low spirited too, Mr. Harrison; have you met with nothing diverting;—’

‘ NOTHING, madam,’ said he, and sighed.

WHEN they came home they found Mr. Jarvis and Mr. Harrison at back-gammon. —Harriot went immediately into her own apartment.

MR. HARRISON, as soon as his son came into the room, put a letter into his hands. ‘ I am sorry,’ said he, ‘ that we must leave our good friends here for a few days; but the death of your uncle makes our journey to Berkshire absolutely necessary on many accounts.’

HARRISON would have been very sorry to leave his mistress so near the time appointed for their

their wedding, if his mind had not been deprived of its peace, by the intelligence communicated to him at Miss Mowbray's: but he left Raven's-Nest the next morning with his father without reluctance, because Harriot's altered behaviour to him, before his departure, convinced him that the intelligence which he had heard might be depended upon.

MR. HARRISON, perceiving his son extremely dejected, asked him with his usual tenderness, if he was not well.

'I AM perfectly well in health, Sir,' replied he, but——

HERE he stopped, and sighed.

'WHAT then has happened to occasion such a check to your natural chearfulness?'

'A LADY, Sir, at Miss Mowbray's last night, shocked me to the greatest degree, by informing me that Miss Jarvis had, to her knowledge, an affair at this time with a young officer not worth six-pence; and that she had promised to enable him to make a figure agreeably to his wishes out of her pin-money.'

'I CAN hardly believe what you tell me, son—Some envious devil has trumped up this story on purpose to make mischief—It is a very unlikely story, and I will not give credit to it: I have a better opinion
of

‘ of Miss Jarvis than to think that she has deserved so heavy a charge.’

‘ I WISH, Sir, that *I could not* give credit to it; but this intercepted letter will, I trust, exculpate me from the accusation of credulity.’

HE then gave the letter to his father, who was struck dumb at the perusal of it.

HARRIOT, in a short time after the departure of the *Harrisons*, was questioned about *her* dejection, and surprized her parents in the same manner as her lover had surprized *his* father, by producing an intercepted letter: by that letter it appeared that he had been married for some years.

THE astonishment and concern which Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis felt upon the occasion, I will not pretend to describe, because I cannot describe them with adequate expressions. They both highly resented young Harrison’s behaviour; and both determined not to re-admit him on his former footing, till he had proved the letter with his name at the bottom of it to be a forged one. Little did they think what reflections were agitating *his* mind at the same moment.

IN a state of the most disagreeable suspense, the whole family at Raven’s-Nest remained, till the arrival of Miss Clinton’s letter. The perusal of that letter gave an instantaneous

instantaneous turn to their ideas, their spirits, and their features. Miss Mowbray now appeared to Mrs. Jarvis not in an amiable, but an execrable light. An express was immediately dispatched to Mr. Harrison, at Harrison-Hall in Berkshire. They met—were reconciled—and soon afterwards married.

THE wedding-day of Lord Clayton was the happiest he had ever spent in his life; and from the auspicious omens with which he entered into the marriage-state, he had sufficient encouragement to expect a long continuance of the exquisite felicity which he felt, when the ceremony at the altar was finished. For many years there had not been so much, there never had been more, festivity at Bromley-house—Wit, humour, and mirth, enlivened every moment. Mr. Merrick greatly contributed to the merriment going forward with hardly any intermission; he was always a chearful, he was now a highly entertaining companion. The completion of his nephew's happiness seemed to have thrown him back several years: he was quite a young man in his carriage: Lord Bromley himself could not have enjoyed more sincere satisfaction at his son's happiness.

WHEN the bride retired with her mother and some ladies who were invited to the wedding, Mr. Merrick gave a vent to certain conceits which darted into his mind during the circulation of the claret, but which he

He suppressed out of respect to the female ears in his company; and when Lord Clayton expressed a desire to retreat, he grasped the bottle which stood before him, with looks strongly expressive of his joyous feelings, and drank, 'LUCK at LAST,' in a bumper. Lord Bromley followed him immediately, and every man in the room closed the evening with the same significant health.

F I N I S.

